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Reason's Glory.

THE PRESENT EMPEROR OF CHINA.

Printed in Colours by C. Hullmandel

London Taylor & Walton, Upper Gower Street, 1841.

CHINA,

OR,

ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE SYMBOLS, PHILOSOPHY, ANTIQUITIES, CUSTOMS, SUPERSTITIONS, LAWS, GOVERNMENT, EDUCATION, AND LITERATURE

OF

THE CHINESE.

DERIVED FROM ORIGINAL SOURCES, AND ACCOMPANIED WITH DRAWINGS FROM NATIVE WORKS.

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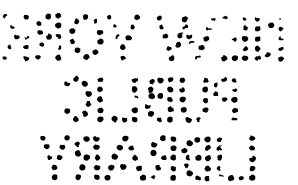

PREFACE.

THE author feels that, in contributing to augment the number of works on China, some explanation may be required of the principle by which he has been guided. He is aware several valuable treatises exist in the English language on topics purely Chinese; but having attentively considered the object and modes of illustration pursued by their respective writers, the nomenclature of whose subjects may be in some respects similar to his, he frankly avows that the method he prescribed to himself some time ago has not been anticipated by any previous publication.

The specific object of the volume is to excite an interest on behalf of the Chinese, in those who are seeking comparatively unexplored fields of research, where they may acquire extended views of man, in his moral and intellectual state, in his social connections, and in relation to the Supreme Power from which he believes himself to have emanated.

The peculiar circumstances which surround a Chinese from his birth, and continue to form his character in advancing to maturity, point him out as a suitable specimen of one of the wide extremes to which members of the same great family may diverge, through the modifying influence of educational habits, irrespective of Christian principle.

A European, introduced to one of the more powerful nations of the East, and sufficiently interested in it to investigate the mental and moral characteristics by which it is distinguished, must first apply himself to the language, not only as the best means of opening original sources of knowledge, but as the surest method of conducting his literary researches among the people to correct conclusions; because, while it is by studying modes of speech in Europe that distinct traits of national character are fully developed, so a knowledge of the language of an oriental nation—especially that of China—is still more essential to the development of its peculiar characteristics.

The writer having for several years been conversant with the Chinese, among whom, through the medium of their best authors and native expositors, he learned their language, national literature, and customs, though no longer animated with the hope of usefulness that first directed his studies, still preserves those impressions of interest which tended

so powerfully to subserve his higher aims. These strongly urge him to recommend for more extended study what many foreign Chinese scholars, with himself, would designate the power and elegance of the *symbolic system*. For, however noble any object, philanthropic or scientific, may be in itself, its attainment is greatly facilitated, when the means by which it is to be secured are agreeable to the tastes and sympathies of its promoters.

Being favoured with access to Chinese works belonging to the Morrison Library in University College, the writer has endeavoured to render his previous acquisitions, combined with appropriate illustrations from native authors, subservient to the elucidation of the several subjects discussed in this volume; with what success others must determine.

The work was designed as well for the general reader as the student of Chinese; and, therefore, both in the philological and other parts, it has been the author's care to avoid mere technical phraseology, and to convey Chinese thoughts to the English mind through a plain, intelligible medium. The symbolic system especially favours such design, since it appeals to the mind, through expressive pictorial images, and altogether dispenses with the cumbrous illustrations of alphabetic etymology, where numerous sounds, frequently ungrateful to the ear, without conveying ideas to the mind, are adduced in proof of

the genealogy of a word, which, whatever may be its hidden qualities, has certainly no external attraction comparable to that of a pictorial symbol.

The author commits this work to the candid consideration of his enlightened countrymen, as a means of exciting attention to the important topics which it embraces, for the two-fold purpose of extending Chinese literature in England, and promoting English literature, both sacred and secular, in China.

For the portrait of the Emperor of China at the beginning of the volume, the author is indebted to the kindness of Mrs. Morrison, who favoured him with the loan of an original Chinese drawing, from which it is taken.

CAMDEN TOWN,
June 23rd, 1841.

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ERRATA.

At page 137, line 13, *for* "Osis," *read* "Isis."

— 268, last line of note, *for* "‡ See Plates Nos. 1, 2," *read* "‡ See Plate V. Fig. 1, 2." And at same page and line, *for* "‖ See Plate No. 3," *read* "‖ See Plate V. Fig. 3."

At page 269, second line of note from bottom, *for* "* See Plate No. 4," *read* "* See Plate II. Fig. 1."

At page 271, last line of note, *insert* "See Plate VI. Fig. 1."

CHINA.

SECTION I.

ORIGIN AND GENIUS OF THE CHINESE LANGUAGE—OBJECTIONS TO ITS IDEOGRAPHIC NATURE OBVIATED BY DEDUCTIONS FROM FACTS—SENSE, NOT SOUND, THE SPECIFIC OBJECT OF CHINESE WRITING—SIMILARITY BETWEEN CERTAIN EGYPTIAN HIEROGLYPHS AND SOME CHINESE SYMBOLS.

ALTHOUGH various treatises on the history and character of the Chinese language have been published by scholars of considerable reputation, still there are points, peculiarly interesting both to the philosopher and the philologist, which require to be elucidated by an accurate investigation of facts and sound analogical reasoning. Having stated my views of the elementary and grammatical properties of this ancient tongue, in a lecture,* introductory to the Chinese course at University College, it will not be necessary to discuss them in this essay, especially as my present object embraces matter somewhat different in its nature, and capable of more extended

* See "Lecture on the Nature and Structure of the Chinese Language," by the Author.

application. The method I propose to adopt proceeds on the assumption that the study of symbolical language has hitherto been little cultivated, simply because its characteristic distinctions have not been well understood, and that the frequent failure of attempts to combine its elements into a rational and consistent system has resulted from ignorance of its modes and uses in practical detail. In alphabetical languages, the written medium, composed of single letters, consists of the same elementary principles as the oral; but it is otherwise in symbolical tongues, whose characters are purely ideographic, and therefore do not necessarily constitute a system of phonetic signs.

In tracing a language so ancient as the Chinese to its source, the interesting inquiries naturally arise—what relation may it be supposed to have borne to any of the primitive modes of speech?—how long did the primeval tongue exist?—has it, in any modified form, survived the introduction of other languages into the world?—were all previous sounds lost in the confusion of tongues at Babel, and entirely new ones created; or, were various and contrary ideas grafted, by supernatural interposition, on words already familiar? From the description of man's first condition, in sacred history, speech, as a medium of communicating thought, must have preceded writing; but whether the mode of representing ideas through the medium of the eye was suggested by Divine inspiration, or it derived its origin from human resources, cannot now be ascertained. It is probable that intelligible sounds were used, in the infancy of the world, not only as names of living creatures and designations of material substances, but also to denote some inherent

quality, perceptible to the outward senses, or some peculiar circumstance, by which each genus was distinguished; like many words now current in the Hebrew, Chinese, and other Oriental languages. It may not be practicable to determine whether similar properties in different objects originated words nearly alike, except perhaps in their terminating or initial sound; yet it must be admitted that ideas not only generated phonetic signs in all languages, but also all the different sounds which subsist in the same language, especially where, like the Chinese, it is unique, and unencumbered with foreign importations. Man, as a thinking being, endowed with the power of speech, for the purpose of enabling him to express his thoughts, would not ordinarily invent new words, except to convey additional ideas; nor would he long defer the attempt to supply some medium of intercourse as a substitute for the oral, after the human family had begun to separate into distinct groups on distant parts of the earth. What method, then, would seem to be the most obvious and rational? On any system, difficulties must have occurred to those who first sought to communicate abstract notions; since, so far as we know, words descriptive of material substances and sensible objects were the only practicable medium; though it is not beyond probability that the "inspiration of the Almighty" might supernaturally endue man with wisdom to express sensations and reflections suggested by natural scenes and daily occurrences.

The first abstract conception uttered by a human being, so far as we are informed, was the sensation of fear, excited through the aural organ, and confessed by Adam to his Creator, in the following manner: "I heard thy

voice, and I was afraid." The emotion was strange; and, therefore, required some audible medium of development, inapplicable to existing objects or past circumstances: still, from his ability instantly to reveal that hitherto unknown impression, our first parent could most probably give instinctive utterance to any class of feelings or sentiments of which he might become the subject, though only possessed of a vocabulary strictly limited to his immediate necessities. But whether ideas ever arose in his mind to which he could not affix a definite sign, phonetic or graphic, is a question which cannot be fully solved, so long as it shall remain undetermined whether sensible images are necessary to self-communion, or man ever thinks in perfect abstraction from the words with which he is accustomed to clothe his ideas in speaking. Much matter for interesting debate might be supplied by raising points on the inquiry—what is sound? Does it necessarily resolve itself into distinct elements, known to us as letters, or were these the result of special revelation from God?

As each species of the inferior creation was naturally endued with power to utter a peculiar sound, which has continued to be characteristic of its nature to the present time; so, had it not been for Divine interposition, one human language would probably have prevailed throughout every age and territory of the world. Nor, when it was attempted to impart ideas by signs, would it appear natural to invent a system so refined and complicated as that of an alphabet, which should indicate to the eye, by a variety of new combinations, ideas and names already familiar to the ear. It is much more probable that rude pictures of the objects to be represented would constitute

the first effort to interchange thought without the medium of sound. Symbols of a certain order, under the modifying influence of physical necessities and growing mental strength, might easily be made to combine with their literal signification a figurative sense, expressive of the emotions and affections of the heart. Nor does it appear how man could describe many of his own propensities, except by reference to the lower animals, whose actions and habits, attentively observed, would be found strikingly to correspond to certain characteristics of human nature, which might be graphically depicted by the figure of the species in which that one property was predominant.

An illustration of my meaning occurs in the use of the serpent as an emblem of subtilty. It is designated, by the sacred writer, "the most subtile of all the beasts of the field," thereby indicating both the original difference of instinct in beasts, and the peculiar quality for which the serpent tribe was distinguished. Now the figure of this animal would be a natural mode of conveying the idea of subtilty to the mind through the eye, and infinitely more simple than the invention of phonetic signs to represent separate elements of the sound by which it was known to the ear. Moreover, if the necessity of written forms was first discovered, either to note the divisions of time, to instruct youth, to transmit memorable circumstances to posterity, or to communicate with the absent, the symbolic mode would seem far preferable to the alphabetic; but if they were invented to recall names, and not to pourtray things, which is very improbable, then some elementary signs must have gradually obtained similar to the letters of our alphabet. The power of lan-

guage necessarily augments, in proportion to the progress of the mind in useful knowledge and industrious habits. The culture of the soil, as our first parents' chief employment, no doubt suggested many terms applicable to other affairs and duties. Abel was a keeper of sheep, probably for the purposes of sacrifice, as well as for the ordinary objects of life, and Cain was a tiller of the ground. Division of labour, thus early introduced, would tend to enrich language. Clothing, habitations, implements of husbandry, domestic and sacred utensils, would not only require names, but suggest terms significant of other things to which they were intimately allied. "The Lord God," it is said, "made Adam and Eve coats of skins;" who, having been thus supernaturally instructed in things immediately necessary for use, would obtain many new words from the labour necessary to modify and arrange different materials in promotion of their daily comfort; while the moral circumstances under which additional wants originated would contribute to increase the number of vocables, and perpetuate their primary import; as the word for garment, derived from the moral necessity of covering the person, would always be associated with the idea of concealment. But the copiousness of symbols thus invented would greatly depend on the progress made in manual employments, their number, nature, and variety, with the degree of skill acquired in art or science of any kind; while the operations of the mind would be best described by reference to physical labour, at once common and important. Man being *sui generis* in a world of which he had the ostensible dominion, could not fully depict his own character and pursuits, except by alternate reference from the body to the mind, and from the mind

to the body; and, therefore, his resources of personal illustration must be derived principally from himself, the habits of no other creature being adequate to supply similes of equal power with the facts of his individual history and experience.

The more ancient languages may reasonably be expected to proceed on a scheme distinguished by close conformity to the existing systems of nature and art. Human beings, designed to be both imitative and progressive, must have owed their improvement, in the early ages of the world, chiefly to their gradual acquaintance with the properties of the visible creation. Isolated tribes, in later times, whose mental energies have been at all developed, make their social and political systems coincide with surrounding natural objects; whence we infer that the physical position of any part of the human family will, in a great degree, decide, not only their external condition, but their mental character and acquirements also, especially where they are left entirely to their own culture.

Perhaps it may be assumed, without fear of contradiction, that, from certain characteristics in their language, polity, ethics, habits, manners, superstitions, and prejudices, the Chinese, though a very ancient race, are not the aborigines of the country they now inhabit, but are descended from a nation highly civilized, subtile, intelligent, and superstitious, whose general properties have been perpetuated from time immemorial by virtue of the *imitative* principle in human nature having been restricted in its operations to the example of superiors in age and station. Emigrants would naturally retain the customs of their father-land with feelings of peculiar affection, and as naturally enjoin them on their descend-

ants, by whom they would be adopted and transmitted to posterity through all succeeding generations.

Supposing, for the sake of argument, that Egypt was the parent country of the Chinese, who, at an unknown æra, migrated to the territory they now occupy, should we not expect to find, in the speech and usages of the colonists, even at this distant epoch, some affinities with the language and customs of their ancestors, and, in the national characteristics of the two countries, some points of mutual resemblance? If, then, the principle on which I am proceeding be granted, many of the present peculiarities of the Chinese are readily accounted for. It not only furnishes a clue to the origin of various social habits and daily practices, but explains the rise of the great dogma of veneration for parents and ancestors, which, with them, has pre-eminence over every other consideration, moral, political, or religious. Their patriarchal system will then appear not to have owed its origin to the ingenuity of the sage whose name it bears, but to the traditionary testimony of the ancients whose general sentiments it embodies. This supposition is, to a certain extent, corroborated by their own historians, who represent Confucius, not as having invented a new system of philosophy, but only as having illustrated and expanded the doctrines of chieftains and kings of antiquity; which, indeed, according to his own testimony, he collected from existing records of a purer age in the infancy of the world.

It is far more probable that China and Egypt, comparing them to two mighty rivers, should have issued from one fountain, than that they should be parallel streams flowing from independent sources, since there is strong

mutual resemblance between the manners and usages of the two countries; and, even where dissimilarity exists, it is only in cases naturally referrible to desuetude, from which the most revered practices are not exempt. It should be remembered, notwithstanding the ridicule cast upon them by western nations, that the Chinese were separated from the rest of the human family at a very early period of its history, and that they at this day observe many maxims and precepts prevalent among the ancient Hebrews, whom they especially resemble in good sense, and their sententious mode of expressing ideas. Now, on perceiving points of similitude in civil customs and sacred ceremonies, moral apothegms and legislative enactments, between the Chinese and the Hebrews, and knowing that the latter were a considerable time in Egypt, is it unreasonable to attribute this similitude to the access both nations once had to one common source?

But we must be careful not to argue in a circle. I regard it as an axiom of inspired wisdom in the arrangements of Hebrew polity, not to change customs already familiar, except from absolute necessity, on moral or religious grounds; so that whatever the Israelites had learned under the rule of Pharaoh would be perpetuated by daily practice in the wilderness and in the land of Canaan, if their reverence for the Supreme Jehovah and their mutual regard were not thereby likely to be diminished, as it was, in too many instances, by doing, from previous habit, things contrary to the Divine will. If, then, we find peculiar coincidences and corresponding practices in the detail of ordinary life between the Chinese and the Hebrews, which preceded, by many centuries, the dispersion of the Jews, and the introduction of Buddhism

and Mahomedanism into China, shall we not have presumptive evidence that the Chinese and the Egyptians were anciently in close connection, if they were not originally one people? But this subject shall be more fully discussed in its proper place.

The object of this chapter is to develope and illustrate the ideographic nature of the Chinese language, and to compare it, as far as practicable, with the Egyptian. The elementary principles of the written system consist of two hundred and fourteen characters, usually, by Europeans, denominated radicals, but by natives 字部 tsze-poo. Now, poo signifies, in botanical language, the class or genus of trees, and is also applied to a tribe of men, to the five original elements of nature, and to the six supreme tribunals at Peking; hence the use of the word to denote the elements of the language includes the idea that "heads of classes" is their appropriate designation. Thus, when you ask a Chinese to what root any character belongs, it is proper to say 這個字在何部 chay ko tsze tsae ho poo — "this character is placed under what class?" or 字部首是甚麼 tsze poo show she shin mo — "head-class, character what?" The following syllabus comprehends the general ideas indicated by these heads of classes, which I have arranged in the order of subjects, but which, for facility of reference, are placed in Chinese dictionaries according to the number of strokes required in their formation, beginning at *one*, and ending with *seventeen:* the *order*, therefore, is mine.

1. Heavenly Objects—sun, moon, time, measured by the revolutions of the heavenly bodies, and the constellation of the Great Bear, which is worshipped in China.

2. Atmospheric Phenomena—wind, rain, frost, vapour, sound.

3. Man, as a generic term—one's self, the human frame—its members and properties—head, heart, face, eyes, ears, nose, mouth, tongue, teeth, hands, feet, skin, hair, flesh, blood, bones, nails, sinews. Relations of life—father, son, daughter. State incident to humanity—sickness, old age, death. Spirit—demon—or the shade of a human being. External condition—a servant, a scholar.

4. Animals, wild and domestic—as the tiger, dragon, tortoise, cow, sheep, dog, horse, hog, stag, squirrel, rabbit, rat, mouse, frog or toad, an insect, a reptile: birds with short tails, and birds in the act of flying: fishes—the alligator; the same character includes the dragon and the lacerta species; the sea-tortoise, and oyster.

5. The five original Elements, which, according to Chinese philosophers, are—fire, water, metal, wood, earth; also, as related to earth—salt-land, hill, valley, mound, field; and, as related to wood—bamboo, a splinter, a branch, a bud.

6. Productions of the Earth; grain—the generic term—pulse, millet, wheat, hemp, paddy, rice, barley, herbs.

7. Qualities perceptible to the senses, comprehending *colour*, *taste*, and *smell*—as black, white, yellow, carnation, azure; sweet, bitter, insipid, fragrant.

8. Domestic utensils, instruments of husbandry, tools, weapons, and things appropriated to sacred uses—these are, a mortar, a dish, a measure, a tripod with ears, a spoon, a knife, a hatchet, a pencil, a square vessel or chest, a stand or seat, a barb or hook, a ploughshare, boat, carriage; bow, arrow, dart, shield, lance, spear, drum; an incense-pot, or an earthenware vase or urn; fragrant

wine used to invoke the descent of the gods; the character also denotes the herb from which it is made.

9. Abstract and concrete terms, minerals, and names of things not reducible to any particular class—as, error, strength, a journey, great, small, slender, long, one, two, eight, a door, a receptacle, the flame of a candle, a covering for the head, garments, a slight stroke, veins on wood or stone, a channel for water to flow in, an instrument of music, tiles.

10. Characters denoting action or passion, called by the Chinese, *living characters*, in contradistinction to nouns, which they designate *dead* characters;—these mean, to creep, to step, to walk, to walk swiftly, to run, to fly, to arrive at, to stop, to stand, to descend, to join hands, to fight, to kill, to imitate, to use, to compare, to produce, to see, to speak, to admonish, to divine, to disturb, to follow, to enter, to protect, to cover, to owe, to collect, to fold, to embroider, to tremble, to eat.

From the preceding classification we remark, first—that the Chinese language appears to have been originally framed with a view to depict natural and familiar objects: secondly—that as the existence of many of the characters indicates considerable progress in civilization, it is reasonable to infer that this is a modified and improved form of preceding systems based on the same principle: thirdly—that in process of time many names of things were borrowed to denote abstract ideas; and hence, probably, the origin of the term "borrowed characters," now used to denote figurative language: fourthly—that the tenth class, which we should call verbs, is derived from the names and qualities of things, in accordance with the principle that

one Chinese character generally subserves the uses of an adjective, a substantive, and a verb; as, 大 ta, *great, greatness,* and *to make great; and* 善 shen, *virtuous, virtue, to make virtuous;* subject to no change but that of a different tone in enunciation: fifthly—that we here recognise the three great powers—Heaven, Earth, and Man—into which the Chinese divide the universe, as the foundation of their system of writing; and, therefore, cannot but regard ideas as the principal end its symbols were designed to answer, more especially as the representations of things in ordinary use, and circumstances occurring in daily life, were added to complete the system: sixthly—it is manifest that these elementary signs have no property in common with an alphabet, syllabic or literal; for, although particular sounds are appropriated to them, they do not affect the name of any character of which, as root, primitive or radical, they form a part; and therefore it is evident, seventhly—that, so far as the genius of the Chinese language is embodied in its primitives, it is totally distinct from an alphabetic tongue.

Western philologists, who, with little practical knowledge, frame theories on the origin of this language, egregiously mistake the true nature of the written medium; and as a specimen of their opinions, and the mode of reasoning adopted in support of them, is embodied in a recent treatise on Chinese writing by Dr. Ponceau,* an American

* The title of the work is as follows: "A Dissertation on the Nature and Character of the Chinese System of Writing, in a letter to John Vaughan, Esq. By Peter S. Du Ponceau, LL.D., President of the American Philosophical Society, of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, and of the Athenæum of Philadelphia; Corresponding Member of the Institute of France, &c. &c. To which are subjoined a Vocabulary of the Cochin-Chinese Language, by Father Joseph Marrone, R. C. Missionary at Saigon, with refer-

philologist, I now proceed to examine his proposed theory, with a view to prove that its principles not only differ from those on which the best native and foreign Chinese scholars interpret the language, but are at direct variance with obvious facts of daily occurrence in its use and application.

If the philosophy of an alphabetic language cannot be understood without competent practical knowledge, much more is indefatigable application essential to a just acquaintance with the principles of the Chinese tongue, destitute as it is of all known grammatical forms.

It is indeed highly gratifying to observe that ingenious philosophers and persons of literary eminence, in Europe and America, devote their ample powers to the cultivation of the Chinese tongue; and I most cordially sympathize with Dr. Ponceau, when he says, "It is greatly to be wished that this curious graphic system should be studied with a view to the science of general philology." It has long been an established conviction of my mind, from which I was principally induced to enter on the present subject, that the study of symbolical language conduces to elucidate the mind and manners of the human species; and that, when it becomes the sole written medium of a numerous people, who also occupy an immense territory, it is calculated to reflect new and interesting light on the position of man as a moral, intellectual, and physical

ences to plates containing the characters belonging to each word, and with Notes showing the degree of affinity existing between the Chinese and Cochin-Chinese Languages, and the use they respectively make of their common system of writing. By M. De Palun, late Consul of France at Richmond, in Virginia. And a Cochin-Chinese and Latin Dictionary, in use among the R. C. missions in Cochin-China. Published by order of the American Philosophical Society, by their Historical and Literary Committee. Philadelphia, 1838."

being. To say nothing of the claims of philosophy and general science, if our political and commercial relations with China be deemed worthy of honourable preservation, the period is arrived when the utmost attention should be devoted to the cultivation of her original language, by which alone her theories of political economy and moral sentiments can be understood. Not only would more accurate information then be procured respecting this distant and mighty empire, but we should be able to communicate to her subjects a knowledge of the most valuable of our arts and sciences, and thereby obtain facilities for diffusing the important doctrines of Divine Revelation.

But while efforts to rouse the attention of the learned to this mighty topic evince laudable zeal for the culture of a long-neglected branch of philology, they are conducted on principles strangely at variance with the dictates of sound philosophy and true wisdom. The argument *à priori* may be of some importance, where probable circumstances are not contradicted by facts, but must surely be altogether inadmissible when employed, not only as a substitute for logical deductions from facts established beyond all reasonable doubt, but even to discredit their very existence.

The following propositions are quoted from Dr. Ponceau, as representing the sentiments of numerous philologists in Europe and America practically unacquainted with Chinese :*—

" 1. That the Chinese system of writing is not, as has been supposed, *ideographic;* that its characters do not

* See p. 31 of the Introduction to the above work.

represent ideas, but words; and therefore I have called it *lexigraphic.*

"2. That ideographic writing is a creature of the imagination, and cannot exist, but for very limited purposes, which do not entitle it to the name of writing.

"3. That among men endowed with the gift of speech, all writing must be a direct representation of the spoken language, and cannot present ideas to the mind abstracted from it.

"4. That all writing, as far as we know, represents language in some of its elements, which are words, syllables, and simple sounds. In the first case, it is lexigraphic, in the second syllabic, and in the third alphabetical or elementary.

"5. That the lexigraphic system of the Chinese cannot be applied to a polysyllabic language, having inflections and grammatical forms; and that there is no example of its having been so applied, unless partially or occasionally, or as a special, elliptical, and enigmatical mode of communication, limited in its uses; but not as a general system of writing intended for common use.

"6. That it may be applied to a monosyllabic language, formed on the model of the Chinese; but that it will necessarily receive modifications and alterations, which will produce material differences in the value and signification of the characters between different languages, however similar in their original structure; therefore,

"7. That nations whose languages, like the Japanese, and, it is said, the Loo-chuan, are polysyllabic, and have inflections and grammatical forms, although they may employ Chinese characters in their alphabet, cannot possibly understand Chinese books and manuscripts, unless

they have learned the Chinese language; and that, if those nations whose languages are monosyllabic, and who use the Chinese characters lexigraphically, can understand Chinese writings without knowing the language, it can only be to a limited extent, which it is one of the objects of this publication to ascertain.

"Although strongly impressed with the conviction of the truth of these propositions, it is, nevertheless, with great deference that I submit them to the judgment of the learned."

Such are the propositions Dr. Ponceau proceeds to establish, on no better basis than the theoretical impossibility of a language without an alphabet; for on this figment alone, it may be truly affirmed, his opinions and conclusions rest. Ignorance of a subject on which there are conflicting statements may be reasonably alleged as an excuse for withholding an opinion; but can hardly, with persons of common sense, justify opposition to practical scholars: yet, if we may judge from the tenor of his remarks,* Dr. Ponceau considers his ignorance of Chinese a more valuable qualification for testing the true nature of the system of writing, than the practical wisdom of the Catholic missionaries, Sir G. T. Staunton, Dr. Morrison, Dr. Marshman, and all other Chinese scholars, foreign or native, whom he does not hesitate to designate enthusiasts; at whose feet, however, it behoves him to sit, not as a critic, but as a disciple, if he would acquire a just knowledge of the language. It is a remarkable phenomenon, whether it belong to the intellectual or moral world, that practical sinologists, who concurrently represent the principle of grouping ideas together to form a

* Letter to John Vaughan, Esq., pp. 5, 6, 7, and 108.

new thought as characteristic of the language, are all deeply involved in error; while the exclusive ability to extricate them from it rests with one who, according to his own testimony, cannot translate a single Chinese term of the most familiar description. Chinese scholars, many years in the habit of constant intercourse, both written and oral, with learned natives — who have read the literature of the country, translated the works of other nations into the Chinese tongue, and published important treatises, in different European languages, illustrative of its properties, are all, it should seem, either destitute of the understanding necessary to attribute its characteristics to their proper source, or possessed of no higher moral sense than wilfully to mislead their confiding disciples of the western hemisphere; while one who pretends to no acquaintance with the language, yet ascribes to it a national alphabet, misinterprets the design of its radicals, and alleges that its symbols are necessarily read "by all in the same words,"* contrary to facts established by the daily practice of the Chinese, who throughout China understand Imperial edicts written in the same character, while the sounds of those characters differ in every province, is alone possessed of the sagacity requisite to decide on the nature of the Chinese system of writing.

Circumstances in favour of the ideographic nature of the Chinese language are disposed of in the following summary manner:—"It is true that, in the grouping of characters to represent single words, the inventors have called to their aid the ideas which the words express: thus the character which answers to the word *hand* is grouped with those which answer to words expressing

* Letter to John Vaughan, Esq., p. 4.

manual operations. But this was not done with a view to an ideographic language; it was merely an auxiliary means to aid in the classification of the numerous signs, which otherwise the memory could not have retained. The sinologists see great beauties in these associations, of which I am not competent to speak. I suspect, however, there is in that more imagination than reality."* No reason whatever is assigned for this opinion. It must be correct, because Dr. Ponceau's theory cannot dispense with it; and this is all the satisfaction afforded to the inquirer. But the doctor must have been grossly imposed upon, when he asserts, "that versification, poetry, and measured prose, is written in the pretended ideographic character, word for word, exactly as it is spoken; and *no two readings can absolutely take place;*" than which nothing can be more false. In the seventh section, which is devoted to the overthrow of the ideographic system, the doctor severely censures the sentiments of those whom he styles "the enthusiasts of Chinese writing"—a singular misapplication of terms — that the practical scholar should be the enthusiast, and the imaginative theorist the only safe guide. Entirely unacquainted with both the Mandarin and Fŭh-kéën dialects, about which he writes, the doctor still, in his own opinion, so satisfactorily refutes his opponents, that at the conclusion of two or three pages, which exhibit most deplorable ignorance of the subject, he adds: "I am almost ashamed to have to answer such arguments"—those of Dr. Marshman and others, on the nature of Chinese writing; "and yet they are urged by men to whose opinions on other subjects I would submit with respect." With a due sense

* Letter to John Vaughan, Esq., p. 109.

of the doctor's condescension in deigning to answer the arguments of practical sinologists, which are impugned evidently because they are misunderstood, I must candidly acknowledge that I have been involved in a dilemma equally trying—between a conviction of the undignified employment of refuting his misstatements, and an apprehension that, if uncontradicted, they might pass currently for truth among those who are ignorant of Chinese. My apology, therefore, for noticing them so extensively rests not on their profoundness or originality, but simply on the danger of their favourable reception among *alphabetic* philologists, to whom they may appear plausible.

The great obstacle to the progress of truth, in Dr. Ponceau's mind, seems to arise from a preconceived theory, despite the most stubborn facts, and the most logical conclusions derivable therefrom. He fosters error not so much from ignorance of the allegations of competent witnesses, as disinclination to believe their testimony, which he unceremoniously avows, without the slightest attempt to invalidate it. His account of the dialects of the Chinese empire, especially the Fŭh-kėėn, is most incorrect. Part of this incorrectness, however, may be owing to Dr. Marshman, from whose "Clavis Sinica" it is taken, and who did not understand Fŭh-kėėn. But it is Dr. Ponceau who says, "we know very little of the dialects of the Chinese empire, as we are not permitted to penetrate into that country." Does the learned doctor not know that there are colonies of Chinese in every part of the Indian Archipelago, where hundreds of thousands are permanently located, who speak the Fŭh-kėėn, Canton, and other dialects, and that opportunities of intercourse, by means of commerce, are afforded continually with

natives from the coast of China, at Singapore, Java, Bankok, and many other settlements in those seas? The grand principle of the language, which the doctor has yet to learn, and with which he must become familiar if he ever be a competent Chinese scholar, notwithstanding its enthusiastic nature, is to *distinguish the written system from the colloquial medium.* For so far from there being one set of sounds invariably affixed to the characters throughout the empire, as the doctor asserts, each province has its own mode of speaking; and while the Chinese have but one literature, and one method of writing, these characters nevertheless preserve the same *power* and *order*, and are understood alike by every one capable of reading, from Peking to Canton. The doctor seems to consider the provincial dialects as written.* I lived for several years at a British settlement in the Indian Archipelago, amongst Chinese who used the Fŭh-kėėn, Canton, and Mandarin dialects; and I have yet to be informed that there is more than one written language. I studied the Mandarin under the direction of a learned graduate, sent from China Proper, by the late Dr. Morrison; and, having acquired it, could communicate, by merely altering the sounds, with the natives from the province of Canton. I also studied the Fŭh-kėėn dialect, under a native of that province, who had taught his countrymen for many years. The teachers in both cases *read the same books*, composed in the *same style*, and attached precisely the *same idea to the written symbols;* but *could not understand each other in conversation.* I have, indeed, been the interpreter between two Chinese from different provinces, whose dialects I had studied; and, therefore,

* Letter to John Vaughan, Esq., see p. 83.

so far from admitting the truth of the assertion—"if two Chinese read the same book, they will read it exactly alike, there will not be the difference of a single syllable,"* I must declare, from long experience, that it is absolutely false; unless it applies to persons of the same district; which would, in that case, be totally inapplicable, it having never been alleged that the Chinese could not converse together; but I do aver that a Fŭh-kèèn man,† who only spoke his native dialect, would find as much difficulty in communicating with a person who spoke no other than the Mandarin, as an Englishman, knowing only his own tongue, would with a Frenchman or a German; and yet he would understand the Mandarin *better* than a provincial dialect. There is in the Fŭh-kèèn dialect the peculiarity of two different classes of sound; one used in reading, the other in speaking; the former of which, in the native *patois*, is designated *ge yim*, "characters' sounds"—the other, *kong wa*, "spoken language;" so that, in reading a Chinese book, you not only pronounce the characters differently from the Mandarin, but are also taught another class of sounds, to be used in conversation, or when expressing ideas without written symbols; a practice in direct opposition to the statement, that "no two readings can absolutely take place." But to exemplify this remark by an illustration or two. A student of this dialect must first commit to memory, from a book, the *reading* sounds of the character; and after having become familiar with a page or two, he learns a

* Letter to John Vaughan, Esq., p. 109.

† Some years ago a man from the province of Fŭh-kèèn went up to Peking to present a petition to the Emperor; but, knowing only his native dialect, he was utterly unintelligible at court.

few of the characters marked with red ink, which the teacher explains, *vivâ voce*, in the conversational medium. The process of instruction is, with this exception, the same as in the Mandarin.

The following characters are given as they are pronounced in the Mandarin and in the Fŭh-kėėn dialects; the former of which, it will be observed, is the same in reading and speaking; while the latter not only differs generally from the Mandarin, but also from itself, by superadding sounds in speaking, totally distinct from those used in reading the character.

	MANDARIN, reading and speaking.	FUH-KEEN, reading.	FUH-KEEN, speaking.	MEANING.
從	t'sung	t'sheong	t'an	to follow
人	jin	jin	lâng	man
田	t'eên	t'eam	tshan	a field
問	wăn	boŏŭn	mooine	to ask
行	hing	hėėng	keang	to walk
父	foo	hoo	neong-pay	father
目	mŭh	bŏk	bak-chew	the eye
天	t'ëën	t'ëën	tne	heaven
算	swan	soŏan	sooine	to reckon
書	shoo	see	c'hait	a book

As my object, in these examples, is to show the difference between the Nan-king, or Mandarin, and the Fŭh-kėėn, I trust I have quoted a sufficient number to constitute a fair specimen of the characteristics of each, and to evince the impracticability of intelligible conversation between two individuals not specially instructed in the same provincial dialect. It is, on the other hand, equally true that these different sounds are attached to

the same symbols, and that these symbols convey precisely the same idea to the eye of every person in the empire, each of whom, though only taught in his native province, could immediately communicate intelligibly by writing with the natives of another province, ever so distant, while they could not converse together. What, then, is the inference deducible from this circumstance?—that the character is not ideographic, and only conveys an idea through a certain fixed sound? Surely no considerate person could thus argue against palpable facts; and yet the first proposition quoted above declares that "the Chinese system of writing is not, as has been supposed, ideographic — that its characters do not represent ideas, but words."*

Whether this be in accordance with fact, let the reader judge. The truth is, the idea of an alphabet operates on the mind of a verbal philologist as a sort of literary monomania, by which all his speculations are hampered, and of which he must rid himself entirely, before he can be brought to entertain correct views of symbolical language. The Chinese tongue knows nothing of an alphabet of any description; the anti-symbolist will not believe in the existence of a language without one, and therefore confuses himself and his disciples by a mere play upon the terms—'lexigraphic alphabets,' 'syllabic alphabets,' and 'elementary alphabets,'† one of which he would fain affix to the Chinese characters; but it is a useless addition, and in their energetic metaphors would be represented *by the figure of a snake with feet*—an encumbrance, rather than a benefit. But how will the advocate of such a

* See p. 15 of this Essay.

† See proposition 4th, as quoted above, p. 16.

system, on the principles it embodies, explain the simple fact, that while numerous conventional sounds, varying in districts as well as provinces, are attached to one symbol—and it might admit of an indefinite number without violating any law of the written language — there should be the same explanation given of its meaning throughout the empire? On the ideographic system all is plain. The meaning and form of the characters are uniform, and, so to speak, inherent; while the sounds are not inherent, but conventional. The grand error committed by western philologists who have studied the principles of such Oriental tongues as the Chinese, Cochin-Chinese, Egyptian, and others, appears to consist in comparing oral affinities instead of similar *forms*, and in taking for granted, contrary to established fact, that each character has a distinct sound; whereas, without the written medium of such languages, they would neither possess unity of purpose nor any fixed principle of interpretation. The characters, indeed, are the mode of communication, to which the dialects are subservient. Hence the opinion often advanced by those who have never studied Chinese, that the language may be learned without the symbols, ought to be totally reversed; since the graphic system which guides the idiom may be acquired for all useful purposes of reading and writing, without the ability to converse; while no one ignorant of the character can speak Chinese to any extent. A person living among natives might, indeed, obtain some knowledge of their colloquial medium without the symbols, but it would consist principally of names of familiar objects and ideas, which, abstracted from their written forms, no Chinaman would ever honour with the designation of scholarship. I am aware that there have

been attempts to make vocabularies of sounds in the Roman letter, unaccompanied with the Chinese character; but these are useless to natives, and of no further benefit to foreigners than to remind them of symbols previously acquired, which must always be present to the eye of the mind before it can apprehend the specific idea attached to the sound.

I am happy to be able to adduce the testimony of the late Dr. Morrison from a preface to his last philological work, "A Vocabulary of the Canton Dialect," in which he intimates that it was his intention, originally, to have omitted the Chinese characters, but it was found on trial that they could not be dispensed with. "The want of the character," says the doctor, "made the mode of communication very imperfect, unless the learner had the constant assistance of a person who already knew the Roman letters and the Chinese language. To convey the spoken language without the character is not impracticable, but is difficult, and often embarrassing to the learner; whereas, the character being presented to the eye of the native makes all simple and easy. The writer has therefore failed in his expectation." Whence the *primary* object of a foreigner who wishes to succeed in his intercourse with China must be, at all events, to acquire a knowledge of the character, with the facility of pronouncing it according to the usage of the Mandarins. Into whatever province he then goes, he will have made provision for speedy success in attaining the local dialect, if its acquisition be needful; since his knowledge of their literature will procure him the respect of the natives, and his ability to write the symbols supply an efficient medium of communication with them on all possible subjects.

I must still request the reader to bear in mind the distinction between what Chinese writers call the colloquial medium, and the mere sounds of the characters. To all the symbols there are names attached, many of which are the same, and could not be understood by natives without seeing their different forms in writing, unless they were the sounds of characters taken from a book written in the usual mode of conversation. There is, indeed, nothing more difficult, even to an experienced scholar, than to affix the appropriate symbols to homophonous words written in the Roman letter. It is remarkable, not only that each sound consists of but one syllable; or, more correctly, is effected by a single impulse of the breath, but that many different ideas having diversified symbols should be pronounced alike. In exemplification of the comparative number of written forms attached to one sound, I may adduce the words *tsan*, *le*, *chin*, *he*, and *e*, perhaps of the most frequent occurrence in the Chinese language, each of which, in the preceding order, has, respectively, sixty, eighty, one hundred, one hundred and eighty, and two hundred and sixty-five symbols, every one differing in form and meaning. This comparison is deduced from the abstract of Morrison's Dictionary,* syllabically arranged in the order of the English alphabet, which comprises only about one-third of the characters explained in the first part, and therefore is to be considered as a specimen on a reduced scale. It will hence, I apprehend, appear clear to the reader, that unless one specific character be imprinted on the retina, concurrently with the aural impression produced by the sound, the latter cannot convey to the mind any definite idea. Some illustration of this

* Vol. I. Part II.

circumstance is afforded by a proper name in English, representing numerous individuals totally unlike in person, of different families, dissimilar in rank and station, who could not be recognised without some distinctive prænomen or characteristic appellative; but the sight of whom, to one acquainted with several of that name, would immediately suffice. The Chinese symbol, delineated by the pencil, may be regarded as a representative of the idea, which it is impossible to mistake; while a single verbal name would be so ambiguous as to require it either to be written or coupled with a synonymous character of a different sound. For example, the word *tsze* has the following variety of graphic forms, according to the idea it is designed to express; namely, 子 *son;* 自 *self;* 字 *literature;* 慈 *tenderness;* 疵 *moral defect;* 祠 *sacrifice;* 洽 *to state to a superior;* 賜 *to bestow on an inferior;* about which, though thus isolated, there is not the slightest ambiguity when written. But in order to make the particular idea intelligible in conversation *tsze* requires to be associated with the following words: 兒 urh; 己 ke; 文 wan; 悲 pei; 痛 ping; 祀 sze; 稟 pin; 賞 shang; the union of which in this manner—urh-tsze, son; tsze-ke, self; tsze-wăn, literature; tsze-pei, compassion; tsze-ping, sickness; tsze-sze, sacrifice; tsze-pin, to state to a superior; shang-tsze, to bestow on an inferior — constitutes the broad distinction between the colloquial and classical style of writing. Authors who write in the familiar manner would use *two* symbols; those who affect the ancient sententious style, only one. It is the names of symbols in the latter style which are so frequently confounded with the oral language; whereas, writers on Chinese, who use the term oral and colloquial medium, never

mean the sounds of written composition, except in the most familiar style; and then the term colloquial is as applicable to writing as speaking. Of this, however, some foreign scholars appear to have no conception, or they would not have called the Mandarin, which is only a particular mode of orally distinguishing the character, the modern language of China, in contradistinction to the classical style of antiquity.

Now since there are eighteen provinces in China, and the mode of conversation between the natives in one district differs totally from that used in another, while according to the verbal theorist each character of the language is the representation of a specific sound, through which alone the idea is conveyed, it may not be impertinent to ask which of the many sounds now given to a symbol was the *original* one? This character is pronounced in Mandarin *jin*, in Canton *yun*, in Füh-kéén *lâng*—can the advocate of that theory tell us which of these sounds the figure was designed to paint? The idea it conveys, notwithstanding the ridicule attempted to be attached to the notion, not only throughout China, but also in Japan, Cochin-China, Corea, and the Loo-choo islands, is "man;" although the sounds attached to it—the vocables by which the idea is represented—entirely differ in each country, as it is reasonable to suppose they would, without the guidance of an alphabet. The alphabetic philologist forgets that syllables and words, strictly speaking, belong only to alphabetic languages, and that sound cannot bear the same relation to a written system without an alphabet, that it does to one whose distinguishing characteristic is the reduction of sound to its first elements by means of letters. Sounds, in Chinese,

whatever may be asserted to the contrary, are known only as the *names* of *symbols*, and might with equal propriety have been exchanged for others, monosyllabic or polysyllabic: thus if some persons were to agree to call this figure *man;* others, *homo;* others, *ανθρωπος*; others, אדם; others, *orang;* provided they all attached the same idea to it, this diversity of pronunciation could not change its form, or interfere with its order in a sentence, both which properties exist independently of sound; and consequently the idea would be equally intelligible to all when written, and equally obscure when spoken. It is a great mistake to call the primitives an alphabet, with which, as that term is usually understood, they have nothing in common, their office, as literal or syllabic, having no influence over sound; nor have they any alphabetic existence, except in the imagination of misguided foreigners. Such a theory would indeed go to prove that the Chinese have no fixed medium of intelligible communication; for if their characters have no ideas other than as connected with sounds similar to an alphabet, then a character composed of several symbols, each of which has a distinct meaning, cannot possibly convey a complex idea, because every Chinese character, however complex its form, is expressed by a simple, monosyllabic sound, usually, though not uniformly, different from that of any of its component parts, and therefore the Chinese system of writing has no ideas; and as their spoken medium is very imperfectly understood without a knowledge of the character, the logical conclusion to which an unprejudiced mind must come is, that the Chinese have no certain medium of communication, either verbal or graphic. Still it is this system for which the learned American contends: I will therefore

give it in his own words. "So* far at least no sign appears of an ideographic language, as the Chinese writing has been called. Its object, as far as we have seen, is not to recal ideas to the mind abstracted from sounds, but the sounds or words in which language has clothed those ideas. The written signs do not represent sounds in the elementary form of letters, but in the compound form of syllables and words. They have precisely the same effects as syllables and words, and do not advance a step farther into the ideal world."†

According to this statement, the following characters 禮 鼞 鱉 離 理 ought to be pronounced agreeably to the elements of which they are composed; namely, the first in order, 禮 *she, keŭh, tow,* these being the sounds of the component symbols; 示 *she,* "supernatural manifestation;" 曲 *keŭh,* "a song;" and 豆 *tow,* "a vessel;" which, united, mean, "rites, decorum, propriety, the principles of social order and personal politeness, civil rank and religious homage, rites and ceremonial usages generally." But what is the fact? It is pronounced *le,* a sound totally different from any of these: the second 鼞 composed of 牙 *ya,* "teeth," 文 *wan,* "literature," 厂 *han,* "a shelter," and 毛 *maou,* "hair," means the tail of a horse or cow; strong curly hair; hair in a mixed, confused state; and, hence, every thing very small or minute: it is also pronounced *le,* equally unconnected with the sounds of its component parts; the third 鱉 compounded of 禾 *ho,* "grain," 勹 *chŏ,* "to pour out," and 黑 *hih,* "black," signifying black; and a black and yellow cow said to resemble a tiger, has the same sound, *le;* the

* Dr. Ponceau, from page 70 to 81.

† See Dr. Ponceau, sec. 2, page 24.

fourth 離 is formed of 隹 *chuy*, "wings," and 离 *che*, "to disperse;" hence the principal idea is "to separate from," or "to depart;" the fifth, composed of 王 *yŭh* "a diamond" and 里 *le*, means "to work or polish gems, to control, to rule, to pay attention to;" hence its secondary meanings are—"principles in matter—in bodies—in man—in the universe—a principle of order and of immateriality." From these examples, which are all pronounced *le*, it is evident that sounds were not intended to be conveyed by the component parts of the symbols; that although a portion of the character sometimes gives the sound to the whole (as in the last of those quoted above), it is itself composed of elements with whose sounds it has no affinity; and that in the composition of symbols there is an association of ideas, from which their form and meaning are both ultimately derived. Dr. Ponceau assures his readers, with a confidence justifiable only in one who had been present at their original formation, that the Chinese symbols were not intended primarily to represent ideas, but sounds. On the question, however, *how* these sounds were to be represented by such means, the doctor sheds no light whatever. "The ideas," he says, "were only an ingredient in the method which they adopted, but it was by no means their object to present them to the mind unaccompanied by the word which was their model, and which, if I may use a bold metaphor, sat to them for its picture; a picture indeed which bore no resemblance to the object, but which was sufficient to recal it to the memory."* Now, before we concede this principle, it certainly behoves the doctor to inform us to which of the numerous symbols mentioned above, the words, *tsan*, that

* Introduction, page 14.

has sixty, *le* eighty, *chin* a hundred, *he* a hundred and eighty, and *e* two hundred and sixty-five *different pictures,* sat for their likenesses; each of which, considered as a symbol of thought, is pregnant with significancy and adorned with beauty; whereas, on the opposite principle, the whole number of forms belonging to each of the examples—and many more might be adduced—is necessarily one confused mass of unmeaning, useless figures; since if the utility of the character be confined to its sound, and there is but one sound to each class, the rest of the characters are superfluous. What then becomes of Dr. Ponceau's metaphorical embellishment, totally repugnant as it is both to sound reasoning and common sense, when applied to the principles of the Chinese system of writing? But there is another view of the case—to my mind most decisive. Not only does the ideographic system derive support from the great variety of characters, of different forms and significations, attached to one sound, but also from the different names given to the same symbol in different provinces and districts, which was originally a rude delineation of one object; a circumstance which may very naturally suggest the inquiries—which of these sounds sat for its picture? what became of the original sound?—for, on this principle, there could be but one—and how did numerous sounds occur in a system which supposes each character specially invented to delineate one particular sound? The doctor professes his entire ignorance, in its literal meaning, of the phrase 法身的時候 *fă shin teih she how,* "the period when the body puts forth itself"—which he quotes from Morrison's Dictionary, under the word "puberty," but *supposes* it does not militate against his views; and yet he attempts

to correct Dr. Morrison's translation of 會意 *hwuy e*, "association of ideas in compounding characters;" which, though two distinct symbols, he calls one word, and defines, "the association or combining of several words in their appropriate characters to represent another word:" which is given as the translation of *hwuy*, "to assemble, to associate, to combine;" and *e*, "an idea, intention, meaning," making both characters to be only one word. Our learned theorist seems so strangely to misapprehend the object of treatises on Chinese, that he quotes, in favour of his own system, part of a translation, made by the late M. Remusat, professor of Chinese at Paris, of a brief comparison between symbolic and alphabetic tongues, as exemplified in the Chinese and the English (inserted in Morrison's Dictionary), which I cannot but think totally at variance with his views. The following translation, from the original Chinese, contains all that relates to our present subject. "The languages of the world are no fewer than two hundred; whose grammatical properties and written forms differ considerably from each other. The principles, however, on which their written systems are framed, resolve themselves into two: — one conveying sound and sense — the other imparting ideas, by figure, without sound. Of the former class are the Man-chow Tartar, the Sanskrit,* the English, and other languages of the kingdoms of Europe in the western part of the world; of the latter class are the ancient Egyptian characters, and the ancient and modern characters of China. Perhaps, on comparison of the two modes, there will be some difficulty in determining which is the superior. It is certainly a defect in symbolic language, that, from in-

* The language of 梵 Fan.

aptitude to communicate its own sounds, the student should be obliged to commit them to memory, and that there should be no visible representative of abstract ideas, which, though sought in the composition of the character, will not (always) be found. But it also has its advantages; inasmuch as the form of the character, uninfluenced by local dialects, is preserved invariably the same; this is a point of much importance. The English language is read from left to right, like the Man-chow Tartar, with this exception, that the latter is read in columns from the top to the bottom, and the former horizontally; the English has twenty-six letters (mother-spelling-characters), which, by changes of position and new combinations, may be made to produce an infinite variety of words and sounds. This alphabet resembles the method of spelling resorted to in Kang-he's Lexicon, which was framed for the purpose of communicating sounds, not ideas; only that by forming a word of alphabetic letters, you can also produce an idea. Thus read the alphabet arranged in order on the right, agreeably to the sounds of the Chinese characters opposite to them, as they are known at Nan-king — the Mandarin dialect — and you will then have the pronunciation of the English spelling letters." After giving directions to a native how to acquire the method of spelling and reading English, the author concludes by saying: — "Although the English alphabet is the same as that of the ancient Romans, the French, the Americans, and the Portuguese, and their use of them the same, yet by different methods of combination entirely different languages are produced."

From this notice of Chinese in its own tongue, the

writer evidently considers its characteristic feature to be, not phonetic, but symbolic, in contradistinction to the English, which embraces both properties; he also takes for granted that the Chinese has, strictly speaking, no alphabet, or he would not have explained the uses of an alphabet as a novelty in the tongue in which he wrote. He must likewise regard it as ideographic; because the advantages and defects he ascribes to the Chinese are not applicable on any other principle. I do not know whether it be the composition of Dr. Morrison, or that of a learned native under his superintendence; but most probably it is the doctor's, who would submit it to his teacher for revision; and, therefore, on either supposition, we have the testimony of two very superior Chinese scholars to the symbolical, and, consequently, ideographic nature of the Chinese language. Dr. Ponceau, indeed, admits that "the system adopted by the inventors of the Chinese mode of writing, as it now exists, was that of recalling the words of that language to the memory of the reader by signs, descriptive, as much as possible, of their signification*—which, in my opinion, is virtually surrendering all the peculiarities of his theory; he has only to proceed one step further, and deliberately ask himself how a people without an alphabet are to represent to the eye the idea of visible objects otherwise than by significant delineations of them, and I think he will soon be satisfied of the visionary nature of his favourite theory. Perhaps I ought to apologize to my readers for detaining them so long in exposing this system; but, as Chinese scholars in Europe and America are, unhappily, very few, and it is likely to please persons wholly ignorant of the language, I felt it a

* Page 63.

duty to refute the erroneous notions advanced, not on account of their intrinsic value, but rather as representing those of a *class* of persons without the means of precise information.

Before, however, we dismiss this part of our subject, it may be well to view it in two or three other points, which will tend to confirm the soundness of our previous conclusions. The Chinese account for the origin of their characters in the following manner. It is received by them as undoubted fact, that in high antiquity knotted cords were used, instead of letters, to convey the purposes of their rulers, and to constitute the signs of ideas. This very imperfect instrument of interchanging thought was succeeded by the original symbols, from which the present system of writing was derived; the invention of which is attributed by Chinese historians to Tsang-hëe, who flourished in the reign of Hwang-te, upwards of two thousand years prior to the Christian æra, and who, from observing a certain constellation in the heavens, the marks or veins on the shell of a tortoise, and the print of a horse's foot on the ground, first conceived the idea of framing a method of intelligible communication through the medium of the eye, which, modified more or less by the existing circumstances of successive dynasties, has prevailed in all its essential particulars from that period to the present. The design of its originators, from the testimony of native scholars, was the best mode of affecting the eye with thoughts, whose characteristics can be accounted for on no other than the principle of ideography. Inaccuracy in chronological and other minor details will not affect the nature of the system. Its properties must be determined by its internal evidence, *whoever* were its

authors, *whenever* it was contrived, and *whatever* were the immediate causes of its existence. The ultimate scheme on which it was founded is reducible to a few simple elements, denominated—*resemblance to an object;* as the sun; the moon; a hill; a horse; the eye; a boat; water; the ear—*reference to some property or circumstance;* as above; below; —*combination of thoughts;* as faith, truth; compounded of *jin,* a man, and *yen,* a word—*sound of the object;* as *ho,* a river; *keang,* a torrent—*contraries,* by reversing or inverting the character; as *ching,* correct, becomes, when reversed, *fă,* defective; and *che,* to grow out of the ground, inverted, makes *tsă,* to revolve, to go round—*borrowed, supposed,* or *arbitrary characters;* as *ling,* to command; *chang,* long; the former of which is, by some, arranged under the third class. The following remarks of Dr. Morrison, in the introductory part of his dictionary,* are quoted not only for the sake of his authority in Chinese matters, but because they contain, in small compass, what the writer conceives to be a graphic description of the properties of the language. "To convey ideas to the mind by the eye, the Chinese language answers all the purposes of a written medium, as well as the alphabetic system of the west, and, perhaps, in some respects, better. As sight is quicker than hearing, so ideas reaching the mind by the eye are quicker, more striking, and vivid, than those which reach the mind by the slower progress of sound. The character forms a picture which really is, or, by early associations, is considered beautiful and impressive. The Chinese fine writing (when fully understood, by dispensing with all the

* Page 11.

minute particles and diffusive expressions, which are absolutely necessary to give to sounds that variety which makes them intelligible in spoken language) darts upon the mind with a vivid flash; a force and a beauty, of which alphabetic language is incapable."

Having dwelt so long on the elementary properties of the Chinese language, I proceed now to notice the methods of forming abstract terms.

It may gratify the curiosity of the philosopher, and aid the philological student, to adduce some examples illustrative of the process of thought, by which transitions have been effected from the names and qualities of things to abstract ideas, the symbols of which originated in mere designations of material substances. I will take, first, some general terms, which have a moral, physical, or metaphysical reference; and afterwards proceed to such as are designated connective and adversative particles, of which the ruder forms of speech are usually, to a great degree, destitute.

The character 化 *hwa*, composed of 人 *jin*, man, and 匕 *pe*, a spoon, or wooden ladle, with which flesh is taken from the pot when performing the rites of sacrifice, means generally *to change;* whose several applications we shall briefly notice, after having sought the origin of this idea from the two symbols of which it is formed. 人 *man*, and 匕 *spoon*, have certainly no apparent connexion with any of the various senses now attached to their symbolic union. But *man*, as the third power in the universe, and, as a primitive of the language, giving birth to numerous symbols more remotely or closely allied to itself, occupies an important representative position.

spoon, is also *man reversed.* This is now the form of the seal character ; so that the one part of the symbol will consist of man in his proper position ; and the other part of man *reversed* ; whence probably the idea of *alteration,* change, transformation, and other similar meanings. But what may be termed the etymological question of a character has very little influence over the numerous significations into which it may be subsequently ramified; hence we find that a word having once become the symbol of the ideas — change, transformation, alteration, transmutation — is applied, according to existing notions of such subjects, to a change in the state of man physically, to death, to the power residing in nature, or the decrees of fate by which death is caused; and in this relation, though not ordinarily used for death, it is the converse of the term "to create;"— applied to life, it signifies a change of form or shape — a metamorphosis — as opposed to oviparous and viviparous creatures; — applied to animals, plants, and other natural objects, it expresses a change in their state, circumstances, or existence; where there is an easy transition to artificial being — from life itself to things without life, which administer to its support, and many others with which man is daily conversant; for example, applied to food, it denotes "digestion,"— to circumstances, in connexion with "create," *good fortune;* to trade, "barter;"— to metals, "solution;"— to ingredients mixed together, a change of state; — to fire, the act of being consumed or destroyed. From these and similar uses of the term, meanings are derived analogous to aerial changes; whence again expressions are supplied adapted to the effects of moral and religious systems, the characteristics of which

are modified by the philosophical and superstitious sentiments peculiar to the sect that adopts them; thus from the pen of a Confucian 化 would signify the renovating effects produced by the examples of the sages on the minds and conduct of their disciples;—from that of an alchymist, it would denote a transmutation of metals—the art possessed exclusively by his fraternity;—from that of a Buddhist, who believes in the doctrine of transmigration, it would mean to *transform*—that is, to assume after death that body for which his conduct in life had prepared his spirit, whether it were the body of an animal, reptile, insect, or another human being; hence the absolute necessity of some acquaintance with the speculative opinions of the author you are reading before you can understand his language.

By the same word, in connexion with *breath, vapour, spirit,* aerial transformations are expressed in contradistinction to a change of organised material substances; whence are derived various moral uses of the term, according to the sect adopting it, which are appropriated in pursuance of the senses already adverted to; as 教化 the effects of example, and the change of sentiment and manners produced by instruction; 風化 *funghwa* — 風 in Chinese, like רוח in Hebrew, meaning not only mind, but spirit, and moral influence — denotes, in allusion to the wind shaking the forests and the fields of grain, the change produced in the manners of the people by the good examples and instructions of superiors; wherefore moral writers use the term by itself to indicate the cause of repentance, a change of mind in the sense of μετανόεω, a change from a vicious to a virtuous course of life, from a barbarous condition to a state of civilization, and indeed,

from any kind of improper behaviour to that which is better; while, by the sect of Füh, it peculiarly denotes to turn from the world to the priesthood.

This word, which, preceded by a term denoting an efficient agent, implies the power to accomplish any moral or spiritual change, will appear to the Biblical student remarkably adapted to convey the doctrine of Holy Scripture on the renovation of the heart by the Sacred Spirit 神聖風; while the philologist, perceiving that there is no sort of *oral* connexion between *hwa* and the sounds *jin* and *pe*, must admit that the combination and transitions, to which we have alluded, concur to elucidate the ideographic nature of the character wholly irrespective of sound.

There are two other terms composed of 匕 repeated 比 and of course originally of the same symbols as 化, only that in this case both are reversed. The modern uses, however, of 比 appear to have been derived from the meaning of the character, after it was appropriated, to denote *spoon*, without any reference to 人 the reverse of which it represents; since it means, "to compare one thing with another; to put in order; to classify; to collate; and, on epitaphs, to select and follow a virtuous course. It also signifies to provide; to prepare; to make; to approach near to; nearly related, or contiguously situated; to reach or extend to; to refer to; to equal; even; regularly placed; according with; corresponding to; close;" all which senses are said to be derived from the circumstance of "two spoons being uniformly arranged on a table;"* by which we are taught how the pictorial system became subservient to the ideo-

* See Morr. Dictionary, Part II. Vol. I. page 644.

graphic, and how naturally the transition was made from the familiar image of a common domestic utensil, arranged in a certain position with another of its own kind, to the abstract notions of comparison, classification, collation, selection, approximation, contiguity, *accordance*, and if we bear in mind the original of the characters—two men —*consanguinity* also. I do not affirm that these significations are naturally suggested to the mind the moment the eye comes in contact with the symbol, or that such notions naturally flow from it in its original state; but now that they are educed, there is an apparent congruity and fitness by no means discreditable to the philological and philosophical genius of the Chinese, even when tried according to the European standard.

There is another character composed of the same two symbols, but placed in a different relative position, from which are derived significations of a nature quite contrary to the preceding; it is *pih*, two men with their backs turned to each other, and signifies *perverse;* to turn away from; to oppose; to retreat; to run away. Now although these symbols as appropriately represent two spoons as two men, with the exception of the reversed form of one of them, yet the meaning of the character is evidently derived from the original idea—*man*. The usual modern sense of is *north*, but on what principle this was added to its other senses does not appear. That these three characters   and , in their simple state, each representations only of two men, should be susceptible, from the single circumstance of *inverting* or *reversing* the form of one of them, of meanings so distinct, various, and even opposite, is a circumstance worthy of the philologist's most attentive consideration, while endeavouring

to explore the philosophy of the system to which they pertain.

There are several other compounds of 匕 and 比 which I cannot now illustrate: two more, however, not unworthy of notice, are 朼 *pe*, composed of 木 *mŭh*, wood, and 匕 a spoon, a kind of hook or fork, anciently used at funereal sacrifices, to raise victims out of the boiler, and place them in the vessel prepared for them; probably not dissimilar to the flesh-hook used by the servants of the Jewish priests, to extract their portion out of the pot in which pieces of meat were boiling for sacrifice. The other character to which I referred, 妣 compounded of 女 woman, and 比 — still, be it remembered, two men reversed — signifies a female ancestor; thus also exemplifying the ideographic system; while the former of the two characters seems to intimate a practice not improbably of Hebrew origin, or derived from a kindred source to that of many Jewish customs.

There is another class of symbols, whose etymological import illustrates their symbolic nature; while their moral application, from its coincidence with some striking passages of Scripture, is possessed of an interest, with readers of the Bible, unknown to the native Chinese. Take for example, 煉 to refine metals, compounded of 火 *ho*, fire, and 柬 *keen*, to separate; which exhibits both the act of separating the dross from the pure metal, and the agent (fire) by which that separation is effected; the moral use of which, collated with that beautiful passage, "He will sit as a refiner's fire," is illustrated in the phrase 煉人心* "to try men's hearts," by afflictive

* The sect of Taou say the two words 煉心 comprehend the whole of their religion.

events or prosperous circumstances—that is, to test human character by means of providential dispensations; phraseology which, though of heathen origin, discovers a knowledge of human nature scarcely to be expected without the aid of divine revelation; since it involves the sentiment that prosperity is equally available with adversity to ascertain the true state of the heart, and discriminate the good from the bad; just as the application of fire to metal in its original state separates the precious from the vile. Another symbol, in which 金 metal, occupies the place of 火 fire, is formed of *metal* and *to separate;* thus 鍊 is expressive not only of refining metals in the furnace, but of man undergoing a trial for the purpose of proving and benefiting him; whence it is used to denote experience, maturity, expertness; but whether in a good or bad sense depends upon the context; as 鍛鍊 *twan lëën,* would mean a magistrate expert at making out cases in a bad sense; or an officer of a penal court, who, by skill in the law, works or shapes a case to suit his purpose, and ruin his opponent. 鍊師 *leen sze,* a virtuous doctor of the sect of Taou, or alchymical philosophy. 鍊精 *lëën tsing;* the latter character signifying *essence, ether, subtle fluid, what is essential,* would mean made quite perfect by practice. The Chinese have a word of sacrificial import, remarkable for the indirect sanction it gives to the opinion that sacrifices of various kinds have been offered in China from the earliest periods. It has two forms, 殆 衅; the former composed of 歹 *tae,* perverse, opposed to, rebellious, and 耳 *urh,* the ear; the latter of this symbol and 血 *heuĕ,* blood. Its general meaning, to shed the blood of victims, is doubtless derived from its etymological import, of removing the feathers from the ear of a

bird, previously to the effusion of its blood in sacrifice; which is a ceremony indicative, by an expressive act, of opening the ear of the divinity to the prayer of the penitent, who makes this offering in the season of spring, whence it is styled the spring sacrifice for expelling diseases, and seems to proceed much on the same principle as the ancient Jewish prophets and priests did, who performed actions significant of the literal meaning of certain words, under which were couched emblems of the future occurrences and events they were divinely inspired to foretell. The prophet Ezekiel, for example, was commanded, in token of the future destruction of Jerusalem, to portray on a tile the city surrounded with implements of war and the apparatus usually employed in sieges, as emblems of its utter destruction; also to lie alternately on his left and on his right side for a certain period, cutting off his hair, weighing it in balances, and burning it with fire; thus suiting the action to impending circumstances, and most emphatically declaring the process to be employed in the accomplishment of the events.* Many examples of a similar kind occur in the Hebrew Scriptures. But the Jewish ceremony, most apposite to the Chinese, is that of presenting birds in sacrifice at the cleansing of the leper, which, while it darkly prefigured general blessings under a more exalted economy, also comprised, in the specific acts performed, an adumbration of special mercies then enjoyed by the grateful worshipper. Doubtless, the Chinese superstition can never in any respect compete with the ordinations of divine wisdom; still, the sacrificer in the act of stripping the feathers from the bird's neck, that the atoning

* Ezekiel iv. v. Leviticus xiv.

blood may more freely flow, is a lively portraiture of the divinity, to whom the suppliant's prayer is addressed, bending a propitious ear, in token of his admission that every obstacle to the exercise of mercy towards the offender is now removed; and not unworthy, as *a mere emblem*, of a position among the types and shadows of ancient Judaism. The Chinese, as already intimated, make great symbolical use of the human frame and its important members, of which many characters were originally rude pictures, although now so modified as to leave no traces of the resemblance. The ancient form of *urh*, a child, may be called a *pictorial* representation, as it was intended to delineate an infant before the sutures of the cranium were completely ossified and joined; from which the modern form differs, but not much. Its figurative meanings, grafted on the primary one, are—"*feeble, unimportant, infantile, small in quantity*," and others which that helpless state most fitly points out.

Urh is designed to represent the human ear, and any thing of a similar shape or use, as the ear of an animal, the handle of a cup, and a kind of *fungus* that grows from wood, *mŭh urh*, literally *wood's ears*. Its figurative senses are—a *soft* ear, one ready to admit slanders, or credulous of evil tales; an *eating ear*, one that listens to instruction indiscriminately, and greedily devours every thing, without just perception or taste: but if the two characters form but one symbol — its primary meaning will be, a bait to catch fish; its secondary one, a bait, in a moral sense, to seduce persons to evil, by operating on their cupidity. It also intimates distance in point of time; as an ear-grandson is a great grandson's grandson, a person descended from a distant ancestor, of whom he

has only heard. The Chinese have a proverb, formed into an antithetic parallelism, which expresses their sense of the inferior properties of the ear to the eye, as an organ of mental perception: the second four characters, it will be seen, answer to the first four, 耳聞是虛 眼看是實; literally, "ear hears is empty, eye sees is solid;" that is, the report of an occurrence is unsubstantial, but the sight of it is a reality. The process of symbolic composition may be still further illustrated by the character *nëë* 聶 composed of three ears, which signifies a whisper addressed to the ear of another person; the *rationale* of which, I presume, is founded on the circumstance of one person communicating only with one ear of another; since four ears would have been the appropriate symbol to represent two persons talking together in the ordinary way: or it may be intended to denote numerous communications from ear to ear, without any respect to veracity. This character, with the addition of hand, thus, 攝, named *shĕ*, signifies to lead by the ear; and thence, to take, receive, direct, control, assume the general management of affairs, either on one's own account or for another person. The *ear* forms a part in the composition of words signifying *sound*, whether it be mere utterance of the human voice, or notes in music, tones and accent of the language, public proclamation, praise, celebrity, moral teaching or a verbal statement; and, what is singular, it is used also to specify a statement in writing. The symbol composed of *ear* and an *aperture*, or *quick*, 聰, denotes quickness of hearing, and facility of mental perception. *Urh*, the ear, also forms a part of words which signify to hear, to listen, to discriminate sounds, to comply with, to hear and determine causes as a criminal judge; the last of

which, 聽 *ting*, when placed under 广 *yen*, a covering (thus, 廳), signifies a place where causes are heard, a court, a judicial apartment. Further illustrations might be adduced, if amplification were necessary; but the foregoing symbols prove, that while the Chinese regard the organs of sense as inlets of knowledge to the mind, they are careful to assign them a position in the system of morals corresponding to the office they sustain in the economy of nature, whenever they are required to assume a figurative sense. It is the same with the *eye*, the *mouth*, the *hands*, the *feet*, and other members of the human frame; all which, when introduced into the region of morals, of metaphysics, or of fancy, are invested with significations analogous to their import and use in the department of physics.

A few illustrations of the symbol 心 *heart*, whose original form was designed to represent the organ, will further show the various senses in which a character is used, and the methods of combination by which they are obtained. In the phrase for palpitation of the heart, 心 心 *sin sin, tan tih* 忐 忑, literally, heart ascending, heart descending—the former character, composed of 上 *shang*, to ascend, and heart, the latter of 下 *hea*, to descend, and heart—includes not only the idea of the physical action, but the figurative sense of an inconstant, timorous mind. The same symbol, in combination with others by which its sense is modified, expresses the various emotions, affections, and passions of the human bosom; as grief, joy, sorrow, anger, love, hatred, shame, fear, remorse, tranquillity, tenderness, compassion, benevolence, favour; these and numerous other characters representing intellectual and moral qualities—as perspi-

cuity, thought, intelligence, inclination, opinion, motive, conscientiousness, virtue — are compounded of 心 *sin, the heart,* in which their diversified significations have a natural origin. The following are specimens of the method of composition: 恩 *gnan,* favour or grace, which consists of *yin* 因 *a cause,* and 心 *the heart,* intimating that free and sovereign favour is *the cause of the heart,* and has its source purely in kind feeling, of which the heart is the seat. 怒 *noo, anger,* is formed of 奴 *a slave,* and 心 *the heart;* but whether the precise idea is that of a mean and enslaved condition of the heart, does not appear, although it is most probable. 想 *seang, to think, to consider,* embraces the ideas of *heart* or *mind,* attached and tending to an object. 恥 *che, shame,* from *heart* and *ear,* because the ear is reddened and heated by a sense of shame. 憂 *yew, sorrow,* compounded of *head* and *heart,* whence it originally signifies grief that arises from one's own thoughts, and an anxious state of mind. 志 *che, the will,* embraces 心 *sin, the heart,* and 士 *a scholar, statesman, one who is complete,* which is formed of — *yih, one,* the *beginning* of numbers, and 十 *shih, ten,* which is a *perfect number* with the Chinese: thus the two numerals in their isolated state indicate the importance attached to numbers; while in conjunction with the *heart* they denote the point on which the mind turns, the inclination, the will — that which decides the movements of the mind. *E* 意 that which emanates from the will; ideas, thoughts, reflections, purpose, meaning, motive, opinion, sentiment, is compounded of 音 *yin, a sound,* and 心 *the heart.* But these examples must suffice; many characters, it is admitted, are formed of elements which have lost all apparent congruity, or at least all connexion

between their present meaning and the original signification of the several parts of which they are composed; but this circumstance arises from the arbitrary changes effected in the form of the character, whilst its meaning remains unaltered.

The connective or auxiliary particles in Chinese composition are few, and derived from words applicable to domestic matters, or material objects. *yew* represents the *hand*, as if to take with the hand; hence the idea of *more*, and then *moreover, and further, still more*, are its chief meanings in composition. *tseay*, which is defined, a particle ushering in a sentence, originally signified a vessel in which offerings were presented to the gods; the two perpendicular strokes of the character representing its feet, and the lower horizontal stroke the ground; but it is now used as an *expletive*, as an *expression of doubt*, and as an *inferential particle;* ideas that certainly have no apparent connexion with a sacrificial vessel, which the two sides and the base of the character were designed to represent, unless it be in the offering of additional ideas to the reader's notice, which is rather a bold metaphor. *urh* is sometimes disjunctive, sometimes copulative; affirms a proposition at the beginning of a sentence, or in connexion with *e*, at the close of it, intimates that the sense is exhausted: its original meaning is *whiskers*, the hair on the side of the cheek. The Chinese use numerous euphonic particles at the end of periods, purely to gratify the ear, which they designate *empty characters*, in contradistinction to *solid* characters, meaning thereby those which convey ideas. *nae*, "but," defined to be, a particle connecting the preceding with the following, is also used as a substantive verb. There are others of an

adversative and copulative nature, whose presence indicates a degree of refinement and taste. Particles, however, cannot be said to be common to the Chinese language on comparison of their frequency in European tongues; but when skilfully applied by an experienced scholar, their very infrequency augments their force and contributes to perspicuity. Transitions of thought in composition are usually made with the greatest abruptness, undistinguished by any closing or introductory particle, except where euphony seems to require a prolongation of sound after the sense is completed.

Articles, or characters to represent them, are not employed in Chinese with the same frequency as in European and some Asiatic languages. The indefinite article only occurs where the sense would be obscure without it, and then it is denoted by the numeral *one*. It would not be expressed in such a sentence as the following: "if a man were to do so," which would be rendered into Chinese 人若做這樣 "man if do this kind;" but if the sense were to be restricted to an individual, as in the phrase "to make an individual a rule for all the people in the world," it would then be expressed by 以一位人律天下之人 "take *one* person man give law heaven below's man." The definite article is represented in those sentences which require the mind to be directed to a specific circumstance or object, as 吾聞其語矣未見其人也 "I have heard *the* saying, but never saw *the* person;" meaning, "I have heard such a thing talked of, but never saw the individual who could do it;" or 不任其位不謀其政 "not in the station, nor plan the rule," words by which Confucius expressed his determination not to interfere with

government measures when he was out of office. These two sentences are constructed of parallelisms, the force of which, having the same number of characters in each part, is considerably augmented by the relative position of 其 equivalent to "the." In the former, 其言 "the saying," is opposed to 其人 "the man;" in the latter 其位 "the office," to 其政 "the government." 其 is also used for he, his, she, hers, it, its. Gender, number, and inflections being alike unknown to Chinese words, the sexes, plurality of persons or things, are distinguished by the addition of some separate character, expressive of male, or female, or by some numeral. There is a class of characters designated numerals commonly prefixed to different substantives, in the colloquial medium that may be thought to resemble the indefinite article in English. *Ko* 個 is a very common one, and may be used with numerous characters of different significations, although properly each noun ought to have its own numeral prefixed; as 一本書 "one volume book;" 一隻船 *yih chih chuen*, a ship; 一個人 *yih ko jin*, a man. Here 本隻個 are numerals, merely used for the sake of explicitness in conversation, or in the style of writing most nearly approaching thereto; but not necessarily required in composition.

These direct examples of the nature and power of the language must suffice, as opportunities of incidental illustration will occur during the discussion of Chinese theories and doctrines. But having said so much on the written symbols, which are not necessarily connected with any phonetic system, it behoves me now to state more particularly the characteristics of the oral medium. It has been already shown that each character is mono-

syllabic, and that the same sound is attached to many different forms and ideas. To countervail, in some degree, this defect of their oral system, the Chinese have adopted a method of intonation which consists in appropriating a peculiar tone of voice to a specific word, to alter its signification. There are four tones 平上去入—the *even*, the *ascending*, the *departing*, the *entering*, generally called *even* and *side* tones, and subdivided by some scholars into upper and lower ascending, upper and lower even, upper and lower departing, upper and lower entering tones; but, excepting the *ping-shing*, these minute distinctions are not carried out, in the general language of China, with such precision as in some local dialects, of which the Fŭh-kèèn and Canton may be cited as specimens. It may appear singular that the well-educated Mandarin should not discriminate sounds so exquisitely as the untutored inhabitant of the province; but the apparent difficulty admits of an easy solution, when it is considered that variety of intonation was originated not to promote the pleasures of harmony, but to increase the facilities of oral intercourse, which, amidst so many syllables of the same sound, must needs be confused and uncertain to a person unacquainted with the symbols: for example, the word *tèèn* means *heaven, field, fear, to plough*, according to the tone of voice in which it is uttered; but if the written form of each idea— 天 *heaven*, 田 *a field*, 恁 *fear*, 佃 *to plough* — be present to the mind, all is plain, even though the proper tone be neglected. Now, where a person cannot read, it is of the utmost importance for him to learn to discriminate and express *tèèn*, or any other word, so as to convey the different ideas of which the varied intonation renders it

susceptible. It is the duty of every native teacher to instruct his pupils in the proper tones of each character when they begin to read; the progress of whom he facilitates by affixing to it the following marks, or accents, indicative of the tone, ○ ∧ – — ∪, as exemplified in the written symbols above; but these oral distinctions necessarily require the living voice to render them intelligible, except the last ∪, which may be expressed by *tėė*, with the accent on the right side of the character, thus 倎 which, although the sound of *n* is not heard, the Chinese classify with *tėėn:* hence all words ending in *an, ang, en, euen, in, ing, un, ung,* which are characterized by the four tones, have their corresponding entering tones, which we should express by *ă ĕ ĭh ŏ ŭh,* annexed; as *wan* wă, *shen* shĕ, *tsin* tsĭh, *leuen* leŏ, *chung* chŭh. The only additional variety of sounds consists in an aspirate between the consonants *k p t ts* and the following vowel, as *k'e p'e t'e* uttered with a forcible breathing, to distinguish it from *ke pe te,* similar distinctions subsisting between all words having a vowel after either of these consonants, as *k'ung* and *kung, p'ing* and *ping, t'an* and *tan, k'ėėn* and *kėėn. K* is often confounded with *tch,* in the northern parts of the empire. All the different words and tones of the Chinese language, by which I mean the *names* of the symbols, how numerous soever they may be — and they have been computed at 40,000 — do not amount to more than 1,320 in the general language of the country, even including the division of the *ping shing.* According to Dr. Morrison's arrangement of the sounds, in Roman letters, the number of syllables is 411: of these, 108 are of the *jih-shing,* and terminate in a short vowel or the letter *h*; if, therefore, we subtract this

number from 411, and multiply the remainder, 303, by four, we shall have 1,212; to which must be added the 108, to give the true result of the number of distinct tones applicable to all the symbols of thought in the Chinese language; the only additional variety of sound consisting in the aspirated words, which are not many, and the substitution of a different tone to indicate that the word is a verb. The system of intonation is of comparatively modern invention. It was devised to give greater variety and precision to the oral language, which accounts for its cultivation and extension among children of the rural districts, who acquire it with remarkable accuracy, without knowing the symbols, from, it is presumed, early care in disciplining the ear to nice and (to foreigners) almost imperceptible differences of sound, on which depends to so great a degree the correct apprehension and discrimination of ideas. But, after all, with whatever success the tones are cultivated, it will be evident to the European scholar that the oral medium of the Chinese can never pretend to oratorical power in any degree equal to that of the languages of Greece and Rome, although they themselves speak of the falling flowers of eloquence, as sometimes characteristic of their native oratory. The short, abrupt sounds, intermingled with aspirates and harsh cadences, produce a monotonous and unpleasing effect on the ear; while the perpetual recurrence of the same monosyllables renders it necessary, for the sake of effect, to use many more words in speaking than the number of characters which even a perspicuous style of writing requires. To draw still more accurately the distinction between the powers and properties of the written and oral mediums of China, it will

be necessary to adduce a few examples peculiar to each, which will also illustrate the difference generally between a symbolic and an alphabetic tongue. *Mankind* is expressed in writing by 世人 *world men,* in speaking by 世間上的人 *world within upon's men.* The question, *where are you going to?* is sufficiently expressed, when written, by the phrase 何處而去 *what place and go?* but to be understood in speaking would require both more numerous and more familiar characters, as 你到那裡往去 *you to what place proceed go?* To convey the idea, *It is now many years since I saw him,* 數久年未見他 *numerous years not yet see him,* would be abundantly explicit in writing; while in conversation it would be desirable to say, 好多年我沒有會遇他 *good many years I not have met with him.* For *excessively good,* 絕好 would suffice, if written; while the same idea is expressed in the spoken idiom by 了不得這麼好 *perfectly unattainable this kind good.* It is evident, from these and other specimens previously adduced, that were it not for the symbolic nature of Chinese, which excludes an alphabet, and necessarily requires each character to stand alone, alike detached from the preceding and the following one in visible form, the oral language would long ere this have become polysyllabic. In its present state, where two or three syllables falling on the ear, and producing no other impression on the mind than a single symbol would convey to the eye, the words, according to European distinctions, would be called dissyllabic or trisyllabic.

It is probably in a similar way, by the union of several monosyllables, each expressive of a distinct idea, that the very long words which are found in some ancient and

modern languages originally occurred. It is remarked by a Sanscrit scholar,* on the comparative identity of the Chinese with the Sanscrit—"I believe it is admitted, by the learned, that a similar structure in alphabets is one test of the derivation of one language from another; and if so, the Chinese language is evidently derived from the Sanscrit; for whilst it has borrowed its arrangement from the Sanscrit, it has dispensed with some of the letters." A comparative table is then given of the Sanscrit alphabet and the supposed Chinese alphabet romanized; of which, though I have studied the Chinese language many years, I never before heard. It is due to the author of the Grammar to state that his authority on this point is the "Calcutta Christian Observer, for September, 1835;" and it is also due to the Chinese symbols to affirm that they never had an alphabet, and will never need one; for the moment the phonetic system of conveying ideas by words reducible to certain primary sounds, usually called an alphabet, comes into general operation in China, its symbolic language disappears; just as the Egyptian hieroglyphs ceased to be known in Egypt when the Coptic alphabet gained the ascendancy. The peculiarity of this error lies in the circumstance of its having originated in the capital of India, a portion of whose territory is contiguous to China, and consequently favourable to the acquisition of correct information on the nature of its language. I see no way of accounting for it, without imputing inexcusable carelessness to its author, except on the supposition that he has confounded the Chinese with the Manshur Tartar, which is an alphabetic language,

* M. W. Woollaston, Esq., Government Sanscrit College, Calcutta, in the Preface to his Sanscrit Grammar, pp. 4, 5.

spoken by the present Imperial family, and may perhaps bear some affinity to the Sanscrit. It is, however, remarkable that some of the names of the Sanscrit letters—such as *cha, ta, sa, sha, ya, ma,* and (if the *h* inserted be merely an aspirate) *chha, tha, pha* — are exactly the same in sound as some of the Chinese monosyllables; that is, the names of its symbols, of which I adduce the following: 查 *cha,* to investigate; 大 *ta,* great; 銊 *să,* a spear or lance; 灑 *sha,* to sprinkle water; 牙 *ya,* a tooth; 馬 *ma,* a horse; 茶 *chha,* tea; 他 *tha,* or *t'a,* he; 叱 *pha,* or *p'a,* the appearance of a tuft of hair, and connected with 拏 *na* (both a Sanscrit and a Chinese sound), dishevelled hair. Several other symbols, of the same sounds and of different meanings, might have been added to these, which, be it remembered, are taken promiscuously from the language in general, to which they sustain no elementary relation in the slightest degree analogous to what subsists between an alphabet and the tongue of which it is the basis.

If the Sanscrit words were monosyllabic in their primary state, what are called *clusters* may have been formed by the connexion of these words in different numbers, to indicate that all the ideas which they represent were to be grouped together in one class, distinguished by a line drawn over the letters of which they are composed, from the first to the last. According to Mr. Woollaston, there are three of these clusters in the following sentence, indicative of the *subject,* while the *attribute* and the *object* are each expressed by one word: "May he who holds a discus in his hand (one cluster), going to the mountain of battle against Kungsa (another cluster), reeling like a drunken elephant (a third cluster), *preserve you:*" and

these three clusters constitute the nominative, or subject, to the sentence, of which *preserve* is the attribute, and *you* the object. Not being a Sanscrit scholar, I cannot ascertain whether each separate idea, of which the clusters are composed, was originally expressed by a monosyllable. In another specimen, to exemplify the construction of a sentence in poetry, as well as the mode of clustering words, the original is represented in Roman letters, thus: "Prajánámeba bhrityartham satábhayobalim agrahit. Sahasragun, amutsrashthumadattehi rasán rabih:" and in this way, from some Chinese terms *romanized*, the language would appear, to Europeans, not only polysyllabic, but to consist of words of extraordinary length. The Chinese term for *mankind*, expressed in Roman letters joined together, would be "shekeenshangteihjin," only two letters shorter than the longest of the above quoted Sanscrit words; for *philosopher*, according to European notions, it would be necessary to use a still longer cluster, "chachătéénténtejinwuhchelechay." The difference between the two languages is, that the Sanscrit scholar has elementary *sounds*, to which these long compounds are reducible; whereas a Chinese could proceed no further than to analyze the separate *ideas* of which each combination is formed, whether addressed to him *vivâ voce*, or written in his own character; as "philosopher," which he would render 查察天地人物之理者 "he who investigates the principles of heaven, earth, man, and things." It is not, therefore, at all probable that the Chinese has been derived from the Sanscrit; unless it be admitted, by those who uphold this theory, that one of the languages has since undergone a radical and total transformation. The Chinese speak of the language of a

region named *Fan*, which is generally supposed to be in Thibet, as the source of a system of syllabic spelling, formed by joining the initial sound of one character to the final of another, to indicate the name of a third; for example, to convey the sound of 聖 *shing*, the two characters 視 *she*, and 定 *ting*, might be employed; *i. e. sh* of the former, and *ing* of the latter, which together make *shing;* but from the unaptness of the Chinese, both in teaching and acquiring pronunciation by this method, though adopted in Kang-he's Lexicon, it is evidently not an original part of their language, but a subsequent adjunct, quite incongruous with its native principles; the ancient and still prevailing mode being to represent the sound of a character, supposed to be unknown, by one that is well known; for instance, as 奰 *pe*, "large and robust," is not in common use, its sound might be taught by 比 *pe*, "to compare:" and therefore, although the syllabic-spelling system was in all probability derived from the Sanscrit, which is generally thought to be meant by the language of Fan, and though there is an identity of sound between some Sanscrit and Chinese words, yet the idea of arguing thence for a corresponding alphabet is not only erroneous, but preposterous. As to the true origin of the Chinese language, but little is advanced, by native writers, on which any reliance can be placed. It is said, by the Chinese, that, in high antiquity, they had a language without a system of writing. If this be correct, their present graphic mode of communication was not carried with them when they immigrated into China; and it would afford matter for interesting investigation to the inquisitive philologist, to know where they obtained their vocables, and which

of the provincial dialects now existing in the empire approaches the nearest in verbal affinity to their primary tongue; while withal some new light might be thrown on the origin of their present symbols: for if they were really framed by themselves, as they allege, words previously possessed must, to a considerable extent, have been abandoned, and new names invented to each succeeding series of symbols. But is it at all probable that they once had an alphabet, which they permitted to fall into desuetude, and then erected on its ruins a mode of writing distinguished, not by its *vocal*, but *ideal* properties, to the forms of which they appropriated some of the names of their old phonetic system? The reverse of this would, indeed, be the natural process, as it is the usual mode of transition in languages which have undergone great changes. An example occurs in the Coptic alphabet, formed by adding seven of the original hieroglyphs of Egypt to the letters of the Greek alphabet: probably another instance may be found in the Hebrew alphabet; since, from the shape of many of its letters, there can be little doubt they were originally framed on the principles of the pictorial system, which was afterwards modified into the present alphabetic form. It would at any rate appear, from the similarity of the Coptic alphabet to the Grecian, rather than to the Hebrew, that the ancient language of Egypt had not been alphabetic during the time the Hebrews dwelt there; otherwise there would have been affinities between the two languages, which evidently do not subsist, and no necessity for a new alphabet, like the Coptic, which obtains all its similarity to the Hebrew through the medium of the Greek, whence it was derived; a fact which affords the strongest pre-

sumptive evidence, that at the time it was formed, the Egyptian system of writing was hieroglyphic; unless we can suppose the existence of two alphabets to one language probable, or the necessity of devising an alphabet when one was already in existence. But this point will receive further consideration when the comparative properties of the Chinese and the Egyptian languages are discussed.

The grand reason, as it should seem, why the Chinese tongue has not partaken of the changes incident to language in general, is the steady and unalterable character of its symbols; which has also tended to give that appearance of uniformity to the political and moral aspect of the people, which a minute acquaintance with their history shows to have subsisted amidst numerous and great political convulsions. If it be said, the general application of this argument is opposed by facts, since Egypt — assuming for the present that her ancient language was symbolical — is a monument of the insufficiency of an hieroglyphic language to preserve her in the same state, it should be remembered that the geographical position of Egypt, exposed to the incursions of surrounding nations, and especially to the whole force of Grecian and Roman influence when their military, philosophic, and scientific glory was in its greatest splendour, is quite sufficient to constitute a broad line of distinction between her and China; which, though the subject of frequent invasions and distressing internal conflicts, has, while succumbing under the power of her adversaries, commanded their homage to her institutions, customs, and language, which her conquerors have not only failed to eradicate or modify, but have even adopted and perpetu-

ated with whatever other sentiments and theories they could ingraft on the native stock. The Buddhism of India, with its religious and superstitious rites, the Mahometanism of Arabia, with her mathematical and astronomical science, the military prowess of the Tartars, though successful in subjugating the whole empire to their dominion, could not subvert one important institution, change materially the habits and customs of the people, supersede the use of the native tongue, modify its existing characteristics, or in anywise diminish the prevalence of the written symbols by the substitution of their own language; although since the accession of the present dynasty, all the honours and emoluments of the empire have been at its disposal, accompanied with ceaseless efforts to render Tartar influence supreme. Two reasons, therefore, may be assigned for such a state of political existence, after an experiment of three hundred years: the first is, the innate and rooted aversion to change, which is at this day strikingly characteristic of the Chinese; numbers of whom suffered death at the time of the conquest, because they would not submit to the Tartar custom of shaving the head, which, after much opposition, was at length imposed on the whole empire; the second reason is to be found in the superior systems of Chinese polity, both national and social, compared to those of the Tartars, and the facility with which the existing manners and institutions of a large empire might be adopted, when any attempt at their subversion by a mere handful of men would not only be attended with immense difficulties, but probably place in jeopardy all previous acquisitions. Under such circumstances, a statesman endued with sagacity to perceive, on the one hand, the dangers that

beset him, and on the other, the advantages accruing to his own followers, from the modifying influence of literature and civilization, would certainly adopt the alternative chosen by the Tartar chieftain, of sacrificing personal feeling to state policy. But if China had been overrun by an enemy of superior attainments in science, like Greece or Rome or England, and assiduous in introducing its own laws and institutions, it is not impossible but their language might have undergone some modification similar to that of Egypt; albeit no sound statesman, it is presumed, would hazard an attempt to change a language diffused in thousands of distinct treatises throughout hundreds of millions of people, enthusiastically attached to its unique and beautiful symbols; which, by early instruction and constant use, had become identified with their very existence as a distinct race, specially favoured of Heaven with a medium of communication, divine in its origin, felicitous in its daily influences, and eternally glorious in its happy results; for such are the properties with which the Chinese invest their graphic system.

Although splendid specimens of the ancient hieroglyphs of Egypt have been preserved during many ages on pyramids, tombs, and other monuments accessible to ingenious and learned men, by whom they have been diligently examined, these venerable inscriptions may still be considered as involved in profound mystery. Without undervaluing previous researches in Egyptian literature, it cannot but be obvious to the careful student of oriental learning, that no system has yet been framed sufficiently philosophical in its principles, and coherent in its several parts, to elucidate the practical use and primary signifi-

cation of those symbols. Conjectures have been framed on these points, and attempts made to support them on the grounds of consistency and probability; but evidently without success. It was formerly supposed, not without reason, perhaps, considering how intimately ignorance and superstition have always been allied, that these signs were known only to the priesthood, by whom they were invented, for the purpose of securing sanctity to their profession, and unlimited power over the mass of the people. Sufficient importance, however, was not attached to the fact, that a powerful community, existing in a high state of mental culture from remote antiquity, would not submit to the same hierarchical despotism as undisciplined tribes who had never participated the humanizing influences of political and moral elevation; although it must be conceded that the supposed depositaries of super-human knowledge, affecting man's future destiny, would necessarily acquire extensive dominion over his reasoning faculties. But ideas, apparently more in accordance with the original design of the symbols, have at length prevailed; insomuch that these ancient and curious modes of communicating thought are now looked upon, not as the exclusive language of a privileged class, but as having been the current medium of written intercourse among almost all the people at some unknown period of their greatest prosperity. It would highly gratify every one anxious to explore the original sources of language, and to investigate the most ancient mediums of thought, to hold mental intercourse with the authors of those inscriptions, whose sentiments have been so long shrouded in impenetrable darkness, the external symbols of which still exist in a high state of preservation; and, as a natural consequence, to analyze

the principles on which those isolated hieroglyphics were once digested into a consistent and practicable system.

I must not be understood to presume upon any originality in the remarks I am about to offer on Egyptian hieroglyphics and literature; but having ascertained, with some degree of precision, the origin and character of the Chinese tongue, my object now is to inquire whether there be any resemblance between it and the Egyptian; and if there be, whether, on comparison of the original forms and sources of Chinese and Egyptian symbols, new light may not thereby be reflected on the principles of symbolical language in general; and whether from considering the origin, process of composition, and metaphorical use of certain existing hieroglyphics, special relationship did not originally subsist between these and the symbols of China.

In prosecuting these inquiries, it will be both instructive and interesting to trace the similitudes employed by each country, not only as descriptive of material objects, but as applied in their moral sense to political institutions, national superstitions, hereditary customs, prevailing manners and sentiments, domestic habits, and mental discipline.

The questions then are, what agreement subsists between the principles on which the two languages are based? and are there any general characteristics of similitude sufficiently important to identify these systems of writing, as emanating from kindred sources, framed on one plan, and subjected to similar laws of application? To these inquiries, I should decidedly reply in the affirmative; because, from the testimony of Horapollo, several of whose statements are confirmed by existing monumental inscrip-

same general principles; and that the apparent origin and design of Egyptian hieroglyphics have been consentaneous with the sources and objects of the Chinese symbols. The following subjects embrace points of mutual coincidence:—Heaven, with its phenomena; the human frame, and its different members, in varied positions; animals, wild and domestic; parts of animal bodies; birds, fishes, reptiles, insects, vegetables, plants, flowers, and fruits; buildings, furniture, works of art, armour, ornaments, tools, utensils, instruments of agriculture and of music, vases, cups. But while strong affinity in general is apparent, differences exist, which mark the Egyptian system as the more simple. The Chinese, including both concrete and abstract terms with what grammarians of alphabetic languages would call verbs, indicates considerable philosophic judgment in classifying mental operations, and great practical wisdom in the significant symbols by which they are represented. In illustration of this remark, I would direct the reader to the latter part of the previous arrangement of the Chinese radicals, which are, however, incidental deviations in the carrying out of the systems that do not affect the grand principles. The language of the Chinese is intimately blended with the philosophical systems on which they attempt to account for the origin of the universe; and hence it is important, in the elucidation of isolated symbols, to ascertain, if possible, the exact nature of such metaphysical and moral theories. Now do not the Egyptian hieroglyphics require a very similar process of illustration? Is it probable that the whole mystery of so complicated a medium of communication could ever be unravelled by the mere phonetic coincidence supposed to

subsist between five or six of its symbols and a proper name in another language? for it may be confidently asserted, that not any of the discoveries, predicted by the inventors of this theory, have yet crowned their efforts. But what, it may be asked, is the nature of the evidence adduced to favour the phonetic system? The whole of the results on which the credit of the theory is staked, are these:—that in consequence of a certain mutilated inscription found on a block of black basalt at Rosetta, the word Ptolemaeus is supposed to be indicated by the Egyptian hieroglyphics next in order to the Greek, in honour of Ptolemy Epiphanes; that these letters are of three kinds—the hieroglyphic, or sacred letters; the enchorial, or letters of the country; and the Grecian: and that the recurrence in this name of certain Egyptian signs of a particular form and order sufficiently proves the characters engraven on the ancient monuments of Egypt to have been alphabetic signs; so that a conclusion of the utmost magnitude is drawn from premises not well established by primary evidence, and destitute of all concurring collateral testimony. But what at once throws suspicion on the soundness of this theory, is avowed disagreement between its chief advocates. M. Champollion and Dr. Young, limited as their subject is, differ both on the interpretation of the symbols, and the nature of their elementary properties; the former of whom considers them as indicative of simple sounds like our own letters; the latter as bearing the complex character of words and letters. Champollion says, "I attempt to demonstrate, first, that my hieroglyphic alphabet is applicable to royal hieroglyphic inscriptions of all ages; secondly, that the

discovery of the phonetic alphabet of hieroglyphics is the true key to the whole hieroglyphic system; thirdly, that the ancient Egyptians employed it in all ages to represent alphabetically the sounds of the words of their spoken language; fourthly, that all the hieroglyphic inscriptions are for the most part composed of signs purely alphabetic, and such as I have determined them; fifthly, I will seek to understand the nature of the different kinds of characters employed simultaneously in the hieroglyphic texts; sixthly, I will attempt to deduce from all these propositions once proved, the general theory of an hieroglyphic system, supported by numerous applications: this theory will be altogether new, and I certainly dare to affirm it, since it will result from facts. It will give us access to the understanding of the subject and its contents, often the whole mass of a sufficiently large number of hieroglyphic inscriptions; and by successive labours which it will henceforth render practicable, conceived nevertheless and directed according to its own principles, it will soon give us a full and complete acquaintance with all hieroglyphic writings."

The difference between the two theories is thus stated by Champollion :—" According to Dr. Young, the Egyptians would have had a sort of mixed ideographico-syllabic alphabet, almost like the Chinese, who transcribe foreign words into their language;* but according to my system the Egyptians transfer foreign proper names to their own language by a method entirely alphabetical, similar to

* The author ought to have said, who represent the words of foreign languages as closely as possible by the monosyllabic sounds attached to their own symbols.

that of the Hebrews, Phœnicians, and their neighbours the Arabs." Again,* "In concluding this long discussion, by what embraces the general nature of the Egyptian phonetic system, it is manifest, as I think, that Dr. Young, in attempting to analyze only two proper names, thought, and wished to prove, that the ancient Egyptians transcribed foreign proper names by employing characters which, although ideographic in their nature, would express on these occasions alone, syllables, dissyllables, and simple letters."

Now with all deference to our author, this is very nearly what I conceive to have been the method of using the hieroglyphics of Egypt; and it is remarkable that Dr. Young, not knowing the Chinese language, should have adopted, for the elucidation of Egyptian signs, a theory in some respects congenial to its present practice, while, without perceiving his inconsistency, he still clung to another directly opposed to it.† "No effort," he says, "however determined or persevering, had (*i. e.* prior to his first efforts) been able to discover any alphabet which could fairly be said to render the inscriptions in general at all like what was required to make its language intelligible Egyptian, although most of the proper names seemed to exhibit a tolerable agreement with the forms of letters indicated by Mr. Akerblad,—a coincidence, indeed, which might be found in Chinese, or in any other character not alphabetical, if they employed words of the simplest sounds for writing compound proper names."

But let us hear what objections the ingenious Frenchman interposes. He says, "On my part, I am justified

* Ch. i. p. 36. † Page 18, Young.

in thinking that I have demonstrated the phonetic system of the Egyptians to be infinitely more simple; and that this people have transcribed proper names and foreign words by means of a regular alphabet of which each element is equivalent to a simple vowel or consonant. 'The square block □ and the semi-circle ⌓ (says Dr. Young) answer invariably in all the manuscripts to characters which resemble P and T;' while I have never seen in any of the numerous manuscripts *hieratiques*, which I have studied, that it has been expressed by a character resembling the P of M. Akerblad: its invariable form is that which is engraved on my first plate, No. 4, made, as I have also found, like the first symbol in the name of Ptolemy, in many popular *papyri*. I have maintained that the P of the hieroglyphic name of Cleopatra, was also expressed by the very same character—the square and that the segment of the sphere was the consonant T; first, because in all the hieroglyphical passages the feminine article of the Egyptian language T is rendered by this figure; and, secondly, because it expresses the consonant T, in a multitude of Greek or Roman names, represented by hieroglyphics. 'The following character,' continues Dr. Young, 'which appears to be a kind of knot, is not essentially necessary, being often omitted in the sacred character, and always in the enchorial.' I am ignorant on what grounds the learned Englishman felt himself justified in stating, that this third sign of the hieroglyphical name of Ptolemy was *not essentially necessary*, and why he has excused himself from investigating its power; however, I can testify, that I never found it omitted but once* in the numerous columns of Ptolemy,

* Inscrip. de Rosette, texte hiéroglyphique, ligne 14, et par un oubli du graveur.

drawn on the Egyptian monuments; only this character is sometimes transposed and put after the *lion;* and the corresponding popular character (plate 1, No. 4) ♌ so far from being always omitted, is, on the contrary, always *expressed;* but the learned Englishman believed that this character formed part of the symbol which precedes it. In my system the hieroglyphic in form of a knot, which Dr. Young considers useless, and which appears to me to be a fruit or a flower with its stalk bending, has been, on the contrary, recognized as the symbol of the vowel O; since it is in effect also the fourth sign of the hieroglyphic name of Cleopatra.

"'The Lion,' says Mr. Young, 'corresponds to *Lo* of Akerblad, a lion being always expressed by a like character in the manuscripts, or an oblique line crossed, representing the body, and a perpendicular line the tail; this was, probably, read not *Lo*, but O L E.' It is evident that the learned Englishman, having only proceeded to the fourth sign of the hieroglyphic name of Ptolemy, was already obliged to read the name of which the two first elements appeared to him alphabetical P and T, and (suppressing the third sign without reason) supposing that the fourth, the lion, is no more an alphabetic sign like the two first, but a dissyllabic character, attributing to it the power O L E. Such a use of symbols so different in their nature would, in my opinion, be very surprising.

"For my part, observing that the lion the third sign of the hieroglyphic name of Ptolemy, was like the second sign of the hieroglyphic name of Cleopatra, I understood this symbol to be simply the sign of the consonant L."

Again: Champollion says, "I have assigned to these two feathers the power of the Greek η, because I considered the two feathers, or rather leaves, as a complex character, formed of the reduplication of the simple leaf, which is a short vowel. The two feathers correspond with sufficient regularity, indeed, in the hieroglyphic names, to two Greek diphthongs AI, EI, or to double vowels AI, IO, and in the first relation this hieroglyphic group has the greater analogy with the epsilon redoubled, E E, on the more ancient Greek inscriptions. The two feathers answer also sometimes to the iota of some Greek or Roman names; a new motive for transcribing this group, apart from its nature, by the η of the Greeks, to which the ancient pronunciation approaches as certainly as that of our T."

"The curved stroke," continues Dr. Young, "which probably signifies *great*, was read *osch* or *os*. It remains for me to show that the idea of *great* is never expressed in the hieroglyphic text of Rosetta by this curved line, but rather by a swallow placed on the character *mouth*, grouped, according to Dr. Young, to signify diadem."

As my object is not to furnish a history of the controversy between Dr. Young and M. Champollion, but to develop the principles of a system totally distinct and independent, I have perhaps quoted sufficient to mark the properties of their respective theories. I shall now proceed to adduce reasons for thinking that the Egyptian hieroglyphics were not designed to be phonetic, but symbolical; that is, that they originally constituted a series of figures, representing living and tangible objects, and thereby became a medium through which ideas, abstract or concrete, simple or complex, are conveyed to the mind irrespective of sound.

The earliest existing treatises of the language do not extend higher than the fifth century before Christ; while those now quoted as authorities are to be found, principally, among the Greek writers of a later date, of whom the chief are Herodotus, Eratosthenes, Diodorus Siculus, Strabo, Plutarch, Philostratus, and Porphyry. Manetho, an Egyptian priest, who, it is said, wrote a history of his native country, by order of Ptolemy Philadelphus, which is now lost, had inserted some remarks in it on the Egyptian hieroglyphics. Chaeremon, another Egyptian historian, wrote on the same subject. Horapollo, whose æra is undetermined by the learned, is supposed to have been an Egyptian by birth, who wrote in his native tongue the Hieroglyphica, whence it was translated into Greek. This work contains a great deal of curious and interesting matter on the origin of the Egyptian symbols, but differs from itself, in the estimation of some critics,* so much as to have induced the opinion that it is not all genuine. Sufficient internal evidence, however, remains, especially when its theories are compared with the hieroglyphics on the ancient monuments of Egypt, to show that a great part of it is the production of a native, well versed in the system of writing originally prevalent among his countrymen. Moreover, his account of the origin and formation of the hieroglyphics, harmonizes so clearly with certain treatises on the Chinese symbols, by learned natives, whose system is known to be both natural and practical, that this simple circumstance of undesigned coincidence pleads most powerfully for the genuineness of a large portion of the Hieroglyphica. It is conceded by Champollion, that any attempt to deny the ideographic nature

* Fabricius, for example.

of the Egyptian characters is preposterous; for he says, "It will not be permitted at this day to any one to allege, as persons have formerly dared to do, that the hieroglyphics served only for the purpose of ornamenting the edifices on which they are engraven, and that they were not invented with a view to portray ideas."* It is surprising with this admission that there should still be, in his theory, a tenacious adherence to the alphabetic system, to which it is not consentaneous. The misconception of the learned writer on this point, if I may presume so far, seems to have sprung from a previous conviction, that proper names could not be transferred without an alphabet; and hence, instead of connecting together the group of hieroglyphs on the Rosetta stone as *words*—the only proper method of analyzing foreign names in a symbolical tongue—the author endeavoured to accommodate each sign to an elementary class of sounds totally unknown to the language. The very circumstance of the names of these signs being lost, affords presumptive evidence that they were never intended to answer the purpose of an alphabet; and this opinion may be satisfactorily elucidated from analogous properties of the Chinese tongue.

If it be granted that the characters included within the lines are the representatives of a foreign name, I would ask, why each of those forms may not indicate a *word* as well as a *letter*. The Chinese inclose their characters in a similar way to designate a *country*; for example, England would be spelled by the characters 英吉利 (*ying-keih-le*) inclosed in a parallelogram; or they would put a 口 *mouth*, at the side of each symbol composing

* Page 250.

the name thus: 英吉利 to indicate that the characters so distinguished were intended only for sound; implying also, as exceptions prove the rule, that those destitute of such mark were symbols of ideas. Proper names of individuals are discriminated from those of places, by a line drawn on *one* side of the characters, as 若 *Jo* 翰 *han* stands for John, with the Chinese, who, it will be remembered, always write in columns from the top of the page to the bottom, beginning on the right hand. This coincidence between Egypt and China in designating a proper name, seems to have been suggested by the unique peculiarities of a symbolical tongue. Two or three examples may further elucidate this point. It is a rule with the Chinese, in choosing names, to select characters of a felicitous meaning, whether they are for private individuals or for persons in public stations about to assume some new political or literary character. When an emperor ascends the throne, he selects an imperial title, declaratory of the leading sentiments of his mind, and the characteristic of his future reign; as 道光 *Reason's Glory*, the designation of the present sovereign of China, intimates that during his government the principles of reason and rectitude should be pre-eminently illustrious. Successful warriors are honoured with titles descriptive of their exploits, and not as among Europeans, to constitute mere local reminiscences; hence a celebrated military leader was styled by Kang-he 平西王 "King subjugator of the west;" and a naval commander who captured a noted pirate in the same reign, "Pacificator of the seas." Disrespect to persons and nations is shown by opprobrious epithets, expressive of some supposed moral or physical defect. The Emperor Yung-ching of the last century,

having committed one of his brothers to solitary confine ment for alleged offences, deprived him of his own name, and substituted for it the ludicrous appellation 塞思黑 "shut up to study darkness." The Cochin Chinese were anciently designated 交趾 "folded toes," implying that their toes were wrapped over each other in a singular manner. The Dutch being remarkable amongst the Chinese chiefly for their "red hair," — although "sunken eyes," and "long noses" were also imputed as national characteristics — were called 紅毛國 "the red-haired nation." This contemptuous epithet was afterwards applied to England, but is now through British efforts at Canton, yielding to the term 英吉利國 "English nation;" whence we learn that in titles, whether of honour or contempt, the communication of *sentiment* is the great point on which they turn, and that the system of spelling foreign names by monosyllabic sounds of the symbols, though less convenient than the alphabetic, answers every useful purpose. Now if the Egyptians, as is most probable, spelled their proper names in the same way as the Chinese, it would be easy to account both for the inclosure of certain symbols on the Rosetta stone, and the total oblivion of all names once attached to Egyptian hieroglyphics; while insuperable difficulties, as experience has proved, oppose their solution on the alphabetic system. If it unquestionably proved that these symbols represent the name of Ptolemy, I should still demur to the conclusion, that each symbol is, therefore, equivalent to the single Greek letters, of which πτολεμαιος is composed; because the same mode of reasoning, which facts demonstrate to be fallacious, might with equal plausibility be applied to the Chinese. For transferring the name of

Ptolemy to that tongue, *Pe-to-le-mae-sze*, are the sounds which would be required, but they might be represented by a variety of symbols; take the following as a specimen:

比多禮邁士

Now suppose the Chinese language were unknown like the Egyptian, and that these characters were a monumental inscription of the name of the Grecian King, from which it appeared probable their sounds might be obtained by comparing them with the Grecian letters, would not a process take place similar to that of Dr. Young or M. Champollion, adopting for a moment their principles of interpretation? It might be said the first sign 比 represents the letter P (口), the next 多 T (凸), the third 禮 L (according to Dr. Young, *ole*), the fourth 邁 M, and the fifth 士 S, understanding that the requisite vowels should be supplied, on the principle adopted by many learned men in reading Hebrew and other oriental languages. No objection *a priori* could be alleged against this method of spelling that is not equally applicable to the Egyptian signs: and yet the theory involved in it is in direct opposition to fact; because each symbol denotes an *idea* to which a monosyllabic *name* is attached, common indeed to characters of other forms and signification, but not the representative of an elementary sound; and therefore has no more claim to an alphabetic property than any other character in the language.

Now this is precisely what I apprehend to have been the case with the Egyptian hieroglyphics; but whether their names were monosyllabic, like the Chinese symbols in their present state, or polysyllabic, as those would have been to a great extent if each composite form had retained the sound of its single component parts, remains to be

proved. If a case might be formed from a few instances of isolated Egyptian words, I should plead, that simple graphic representations of material objects were monosyllabic like the Chinese; but that when two or more of them became one hieroglyph, the sound of each in its original state was preserved in the composite character, the name of which would consequently, in contradistinction from the Chinese practice in such cases, be polysyllabic. An elucidation of this matter may be drawn from each language.

First, with regard to the usage of the Chinese; the accompanying character 糸 is a symbol of silk, named *sze*, and is one of the radicals of the language; it is therefore in its simplest form. The next I adduce is more complex, as the reader will perceive, 緦; having in addition to 糸 *sze*, two other symbols: these are in their isolated state *tëën* 田 a field, and 心 *sin*, the heart; but instead of this compound symbol taking the name of each part for its own — *sze-teen-sin* — it is called simply *sze*, after its radical, and denotes a species of cloth used in mourning. Another example is supplied by the union of two of the same characters (*teen* and *sin*), in a distinct form, thus 思 ("to think, to meditate and reflect"), whose name is *sze*, though destitute of this sound in either of its components, but still monosyllabic. These instances, as the principle is of universal application, will suffice to recall the fact we have more fully illustrated elsewhere, that however complicated a Chinese symbol may be, its name is purely monosyllabic.

The practice of the Egyptians would seem to have been of the opposite character, according to Horapollo's composition of the word *baieth*, "a hawk," compounded of *bai*, "life," and *eth*, "heart," the sense of which is "life

and heart," perhaps "life in the heart;" because the Egyptians considered the heart as the "*inclosure of life*," of which the *hawk* was the consecrated emblem on account of its drinking blood instead of water, and thereby showing its sympathy with the essence or aliment of life. It would, therefore, seem, that as the names of the two ideas which this hieroglyph represented were both preserved in its complex form, so in proportion to the number of simple ideas of which any sign was composed would be the number of syllables constituting its name; that is, there would be a monosyllable, dissyllable, trisyllable, or polysyllable, accordingly as one, two, three, or more ideas were involved in the sign. This might have been the case with the Chinese, who have a symbol composed of precisely the same elementary ideas as the Egyptian *baieth*, namely, and which are accurately rendered by ψῦχὴ and καρδια, the two Greek words used by Horapollo's translator for *bai* and *eth*; but, then, the name of this complex symbol meaning *nature, innate properties, natural constitution, ability, temper, disposition,* is not *sin-săng*, which it would be if formed according to the Egyptian method, but *sing*.

If the principle of combining sounds with ideas were as common in the Egyptian as the contrary one is in Chinese, it would afford matter for conjecture, how far the simplest hieroglyphical forms only were used to represent foreign names. That there are many monosyllables is undeniable; but whether they are sufficiently numerous to justify the conclusion that each of the original forms of the written language is represented by a sound of but one syllable may be difficult to prove. Another question might be raised on the point, whether these phonetic signs *bai*

and *eth*, had each a graphic figure to correspond to it, similar to 心 and 生 of the Chinese; since life in man is also represented by a star, and the hawk is symbolical of a variety of abstract ideas, according to the postures it assumes: thus, being elevated in the air towards the east, and expanding its wings, signifies *the winds*, as though the winds had wings; rising perpendicularly towards heaven, denotes *sublimity;* descending downwards in a straight line, *humiliation*, no other bird being able to ascend or descend, except in an oblique direction; turned on its back in the air with its claws upwards, in the attitude of fighting, denotes *victory* and *pre-eminence* which it obtains over all other creatures. It is the symbol of *blood*, because it feeds on blood; of the sun, because it is long-lived, and because it alone can look with intensity on his rays; whence the sun, as the lord of vision, was sometimes painted in the form of a hawk. The herb used by physicians for healing the eyes, was named from the hawk, which was held in so much honour by the Egyptians, that he who killed it, whether by accident or design, was capitally punished. Moreover, according to Herodotus, hawks were at death interred with honours in a city* which he calls Βουτος. Some of the properties here mentioned seem applicable to the eagle, as that of looking intensely at the sun. The Chinese word 鷹 for hawk, is also applied to the eagle, sometimes with the word "divine" prefixed 神鷹; but different names are assigned to different species; one is called 鬒鷹 the "tufted hawk," in allusion to the feathers on its neck; another, the fierce pigeon; and a third, the imperial hawk, or falcon; and though the

* Book II. ch. lxvii.

Chinese do not carry their prejudices so far as the Egyptians, they also have a superstitious impression that medical benefit is to be derived from the feathers of its tail, with which they rub children in the small-pox, as a curative charm.

The Chinese, like the Egyptians, believe that the heart is the seat of existence — a sentiment which they express by 心者生之本 "the heart is the fountain of life." In all probability, the moral axiom of Solomon has arisen from the prevalence of a similar physical theory among the Hebrews,—" Out of the heart are the issues of life;" who, in another place, with the same allusion, and describing the heart during the process of death, speaks of it as the "pitcher broken at the fountain." Remembering, then, that the definition of the Egyptian word for hawk is "heart and life," and that there is a symbol formed of two elements of just the same meaning in Chinese, whose sentiments coincide with theirs on the functions of this organ, moreover that many meanings are attached to one Egyptian hieroglyphic, which is also the case with one Chinese symbol, we cannot but regard the similitude between Chinese and Egyptian signs as more than ordinarily remarkable, and alike tending to establish the ideographic nature of these forms; especially as the sounds *bai* and *eth* have no relation to *sin* and *săng*, while the ideas are the same. But the comparison of these two symbols has carried us no further than to the conclusion, that two ideas are united together signifying precisely the same thing in Egyptian and in Chinese, without knowing whether the graphic signs of these ideas are the same or not. If, therefore, other hieroglyphics shall be found corresponding to the Chinese

in *form*, as well as signification, we shall approach still nearer to our avowed object of identifying and harmonizing the general principles of the two languages. To attempt this identification may appear unwarranted assumption to those who object that the evidence already submitted in proof of the ideographic nature of the Chinese is insufficient. This, however, must be left to the sagacity of the intelligent reader, who, I think, can entertain no rational doubt on the subject.

If two nations, widely separated from each other in locality and intercourse during a series of ages, extending from remote antiquity to the present era, should embody in their *written* medium descriptions of certain natural objects so far coalescing in external figure as undoubtedly to represent the same thing, and conveying some thought to the mind congruous with the general impression produced by the prototype, then it becomes important to inquire how nearly these two figures are assimilated in their origin, and identical in their objects. But to state the case in a still plainer light. Should symbols of the sun and moon, drawn exactly alike in China and in Egypt, be found to represent not only these heavenly bodies themselves, but the same figurative properties in the language of both countries, would there not be reason to infer that they had one origin? As pertinent to this subject, I quote a paragraph from some remarks of Dr. Young.* "The common astronomical diagram for the sun ⊙ seems to have been adopted by the Latin astrologers, from their masters in Egypt, since it is not very probable both should have employed a point in the centre of the circle, without some communication with each other; the circle

* In the Encyclopædia, Supplement, p. 55.

alone having been mentioned by some of the Greek authors, who say that it was the symbol of the sun. The enchorial name of the sun is extremely like that which corresponds in the manuscripts to this hieroglyphic, and a similar circle, with rays diverging from it, though seldom exactly in straight lines, is used in the sense of enlightening, or rendering illustrious."

Now if it were improbable that the Latins should use the same astronomical sign as the Egyptians without having derived it from them, is it not still more improbable that the Chinese should not only have exactly the same sign standing in their original forms of writing, but employ it in a variety of ways similar to its uses among the Egyptians, and yet, after all, not have borrowed it from the same source? The ancient Chinese form to which we allude, is this . There is also one with lines diverging from the circle, corresponding to the Egyptian form described above; and although Dr. Young does not say whether these lines proceed from the circumference or the centre, I should apprehend the former, from his using the word *circle*, like the Chinese figure , whose lines, were they continued, would meet in the centre.

These figures are also different modes of describing the same object with the Chinese, all which are now superseded by the modern form . This symbol of the *sun* and *day*, according to native philologists, is one of the class denominated pictorial; that is, to represent objects. The moon also belongs to the same class, whose name in Chinese is *yue*, and in Egyptian *ioh*, which latter sound, according to the power of the French alphabet, is very similar to the Chinese name pronounced, as though written in English, Yoh. It is curious, too,

that these two symbols ⊙)) should be united by the Egyptians to form one hieroglyph — which may be seen on the Rosetta stone in the British Museum — just the same as ⊙)) *ming*, in Chinese, which means "clearness, splendour, intelligence, to shed light upon, bright, perspicuous;" while, according to Horapollo, the combination in Egyptian symbolizes *eternity*, because these heavenly objects are eternal elements, derived from the idea of perpetual light, unceasing splendour, indicated by the unbroken succession of light in the rising of one of these bodies immediately on the setting of the other: and who does not perceive that this idea is infinitely more worthy the dignity of a complicated and refined system of hieroglyphics, by which minds are brought into intelligent contact through the medium of the eye, than Champollion's, which makes the combined symbols of two of the mightiest powers in the visible universe subservient only to an elementary sound?

"Parturiunt montes, nascetur ridiculus mus."

Light, being an essential element of utility and beauty in our world, is everywhere employed to prefigure moral excellence and true dignity; but especially in the East, where all its depositaries and instruments of action are of surpassing splendour; hence the Chinese not only ascribe to it perpetual existence, but seem to invest the element of light with a sort of omnipresence, created by the successive agency of those two heavenly bodies which they identify with its diffusion, as in the well-known beautiful phrase 日月所照 "wherever the sun and moon give light;" by which they designate every conceivable spot in the universe. Another application of these two symbols by the Chinese, is derived merely from

the different relative positions which they sustain to each other; so that instead of standing side by side, they are placed vertically, the sun above the moon, to indicate change, alteration; which is a natural suggestion, from the one power ruling the day, and the other the night; whence the symbol so placed is named *yih*, and becomes the index of one of the most important of their metaphysical systems, designated the "science of changes;" which, it is assumed, took place at the origin of the universe, by the alternation of light, symbolized by the sun, and of darkness, depicted by the moon placed under him. But this theory will be explained in its proper place.

Another illustration is afforded by the addition of 皿 *ming*, a vessel, placed under the sun and moon, but made thus in the ancient pictorial style of writing; which means to take oath, or bind one's self by an open and explicit declaration before the gods, sipping the blood of the victim poured out in sacrifice, under the implied wish that, if the covenant were broken, the violator imprecated on himself the death inflicted on the animal. Whether the composition of this symbol included any reference to the worship of the *sun* and *moon*, or the presence of 明 *ming*, merely indicated the open public manner of the transaction, does not appear. I am inclined, however, to the opinion, that the Chinese have a very superstitious veneration for the mere element of light, which, with their love of abstractions, might readily be converted into a divinity, whose appropriate visible representative would be the sun, which is called the sovereign of lights; and to which probably the sentence, "the light of Deity illumines every place," was originally applied. Chinese are taught to rise in token of reverence, even when a lighted candle is

brought. The word 亡 "lost," placed above 朙 *ming*, means "blindness;" that is, extinguished light. From these combinations it will plainly appear, how the essential idea of the symbol can be modified, either by transposing its parts, or adding a new character; proving that what is effected in alphabetical languages by the disposition of letters, must be produced in Chinese by combinations of thought; and developing, as I think, the only correct principles, on which to analyze Egyptian hieroglyphics, which, like the Chinese, were originally pictorial, if we may judge from the prevalence of rude forms of animals and material objects in the surviving inscriptions on ancient monuments.

Closely related to the sun and moon are the two principal deities of Egypt—Isis and Osiris—a female and male principle personified, or an imaginary power, to which, though the comparison may not be complete, I cannot but think the *yin* and *yang* of the Chinese bear a very strong resemblance. Their names are totally different, but the order of arrangement, consisting of the female taking precedence of the male, is precisely the same — Isis corresponding to Yin, and Osiris to Yang. 陰 *Yin*, in Chinese, is the female energy in nature which represents darkness, the inferior part of creation, and one of the supposed forms into which chaos was divided, from which organized matter was eventually educed. It is, also, a designation of the moon, though not the ordinary word for that object.

Isis is supposed by some writers on Egyptian literature to be the moon, which was universally worshipped in Egypt as a goddess, and, as a creative power presiding over the earth, seemed in conjunction with Osiris to com-

prehend all nature. Horapollo says, Isis was a woman, and a divinity; also an emblem of the year, and of a star; supposed to be the offspring of Thoth and Rhea; compared to Ceres, or the earth, the goddess of fertility and of maternal love, and analogous to Proserpine, the queen of the lower regions in Hades, and the wife of Pluto. Yin is not worshipped by the Chinese, but, as one of the two principles in nature which originated all things, it possesses several properties in common with the earth, as the second power in the universe, of which heaven has the precedence; so Isis, as the goddess of agriculture and general cultivation, seems to bear affinity to the notion of earth among the Chinese, who regard it as the mother of all things. Moreover, Yang is the male energy of the Chinese; first in importance, because the superior in nature, although, like the Egyptian Osiris, second in order. It denotes splendour, light, and energy; and is also an epithet of the sun. In the Chinese system it may be considered as coinciding with heaven, much in the same way as Yin coincides with earth; hence in different aspects and relations these two powers may be represented sometimes by heaven and earth, and sometimes by the sun and moon; or rather by all these powers united, notwithstanding the Chinese mundane theory, which designates Yin and Yang as a male and female creator. So in the Coptic, Osiris, who is denoted hieroglyphically by an eye and a sceptre, includes the idea of male energy and activity ; and is sometimes compared to the Nile, sometimes to the sun; wherefore, whatever may be its external form, it would seem to intimate the all-important power in nature.

The Chinese and the Egyptians so far agree in senti-

ment on the First Cause, that both acknowledge two supreme powers, of different sexes, emblems respectively of light and darkness, energy and fertility, perfection and imperfection, order and confusion; but while the Egyptians personify these powers, and worship them as gods, the Chinese regard them as impersonal existences, the offspring of unity or a monad, but still entitled to the venerable distinction of co-creating principles, from which the three supreme agencies in nature—heaven, earth, and man — have derived their origin. It is a characteristic in Chinese philosophy to mystify familiar objects in nature, which they then reduce to first principles, from which they form a system of consecutive reasoning, applicable to every part of creation, and based on an assumed first cause — an indivisible, indestructible essence, without figure, form, mode, or personality — exhibiting, in all their speculations, a love of the process of abstraction, by which they immaterialize the grossest substances.

It is difficult to ascertain the sentiments of the ancient Egyptians on the supreme powers in the universe, since much confusion has, no doubt, been created by their nomenclature being intermingled with the Grecian mythology and pantheology. It is probable that while they had not proceeded so far in analytical philosophy, as to recognize with the Chinese one infinite essence, their gods having been introduced into Greece, were there remodelled and designated anew, prior to their restoration again to Egypt, under other names and titles. An instance occurs in a deity who inhabited the constellation of the Great Bear, whose Grecian appellation was Typhon, but his Egyptian name, according to Plutarch, was Seth, Bebon or Babyn, and Smy.

In pursuing comparisons, however, we must not be guided by particular coincidences, striking as they may appear: such, for example, as the constellation of the Bear, worshipped alike by Chinese and Egyptians, because all nations, from the earliest period of their existence, have paid especial attention to it; but if celestial and natural phenomena are set apart for some purpose, common only to the two nations, there is, then, reason to infer a more than ordinary relation between them, based on some great and peculiar principles. The Egyptians had what has been termed a genius of the whole world, symbolized by *i, h, h, t, h, o,** which seems to have been a sort of chaos, whose personification was not generally admitted. I am not aware that the Chinese have any conventional symbol of a similar nature to this, which I apprehend indicated the paramount importance of Egyptian influence over the destinies of the world, if not to assert its absolute control over every other portion of the globe; but it is a singular fact, that the Chinese use expressions, which attribute the dominion of the world, if not its entire possession, to themselves; whilst by designating themselves the middle country, they assume the same position on the earth with the ancient Egyptians, who also described Egypt as occupying the central domain of the world, and designated it by an appellation to that effect.

Plutarch says, the sun, called On, otherwise Re, or Phre, was represented by a young child rising out of the lotus, which was also emblematical of the rising of the Nile, and the return of the sun; and that this flower had a sacred character may be confidently assumed, from the "frequency of its occurrence in the bas-reliefs and paint-

* Encyclopædia Britt. Sup. p. 44.

ings in the Egyptian temples, in all representations of sacrifices, religious ceremonies, and in tombs, and whatever is connected with death and another life." Now the Chinese have a term common to the lotus, and the water-lily, of which there are two varieties, white and red; it is 蓮花 or 蓮藕荷: the former character, which is the principal one, is formed of "plant," "wheel," and "to go swiftly." This flower is represented in the descriptions of the metempsychosis by the sect of Fŭh, as effectually averting punishment from criminals doomed to suffer in Hades, when interposed by the goddess of mercy between the criminal and the instrument of punishment, just at the moment of his apprehended destruction. This illustration occurs only with the sect of Fŭh, which is of Indian origin, and was established in China during the first century of the Christian æra; still it affords another instance of the similarity of sentiment between Egypt and China; but whether India was the common source to both nations of the superstitious tenet, or Egypt was the original parent, is doubtful. There can be little room for doubt, however, that the flower to which the Chinese ascribed the virtue of saving offenders in another state, is of the same species as the Egyptian lotus, which, according to Herodotus, is a kind of lily, famed for its sacred character; and that the natural description of the lotus by Herodotus, and the account of the Chinese lily by natives, agree in this, as well as other particulars, that both have seeds.

In the classification of characters according to their final sound in a Chinese dictionary, entitled, "The Source of Characters engraven on Bells and Tripods," there are two ancient forms of 田 *teen*, "a field," the one consisting of a cross, formed of straight lines within a circle and

through its centre, thus ⊕; the other of waving lines crossing each other, thus ⊛; the definitions of which, under the modern form, are, to plant grain in rows, arranged in order, a field laid out in plots, a cultivated field, to plough, to hunt; to the former of these figures the following sentence, from the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, applies: "It is remarkable, that the wheel signifying land had been noticed by the Jesuits as resembling the old Chinese character for the word field." The Chinese term for the husbandman's water-wheel, is 田家水車 "field-person's water-wheel;" the Egyptian wheel for raising water is designated *tung-chay*, 筒車 "a wheel with a tube." As the government of China have, from remote antiquity, encouraged agriculture, and provided for the irrigation of the soil by diverting rivulets and streams through means of suitable machinery into artificial channels prepared for them, it is probable the original word may have been derived from some rude instrument in early times used to irrigate rice-fields, which require extraordinary supplies of water to insure their successful culture. Indeed, proceeding on what we venture to consider an established position — that ideas in Chinese were, in the first instance, represented by figures — the original form of the character for field, must have been so far graphically descriptive, as either to have represented the object itself, or some well-known feature of it; while the Egyptian form of the wheel, we are taught by Dr. Young, signifies land, and in connection with the square, "splendid land — characters which seem to be essential parts of the name of Egypt."

The circumstance of similar numerals in the languages of different countries, is usually considered presumptive

evidence, if not of one common origin, at least of close affinity. *Form* and *power* are the chief points of comparison between the Chinese and Egyptian numerals; and if there be no mutual relation, the coincidence is certainly very striking; for the *principle* involved in the modern forms of the Chinese numerals, is essentially the same as that on which the Egyptian mode of enumeration proceeds, while the original *forms* of the characters are in many respects the same as the hieroglyphs. The Chinese numerals are: 一 *one;* 二 *two;* 三 *three;* 四 *four;* 五 *five;* 六 *six;* 七 *seven;* 八 *eight;* 九 *nine;* 十 *ten;* and for every additional *ten,* 二十 *twice ten,* or 三十 *thrice ten,* as the case may be, up to one hundred, which is expressed by 百 *pih;* while the intermediate odd numbers above *tens* are denoted by characters added; thus, *twenty-five* in Chinese would be 二十五 *twice ten* and *five;* characters standing before 十 being *tens,* and after it *units.* The Egyptian numerals, as far as I have been able to ascertain them from records of the hieroglyphs to which I have access, are: | *one;* || *two;* ||| *three;* |||| *four;* ||||| *five;* |||||| *six;* ||||||| *seven;* and probably *eight* and *nine* are the same, with the addition of a stroke to each. However, this figure ∩ is the sign for *ten,* to which numerals in the above form are affixed, to denote any additional number; as ∩||||| ten and seven (three and four) stand for seventeen. Again; *forty-two* in Egyptian is thus made, ∩∩∩∩ namely, *four tens* and *two.* It is true, the present Chinese strokes are horizontal, and the Egyptian vertical; while some of the numerals of the former are not composed of single straight lines: the difference, however, is rather apparent than real; since on the ancient vases of the Chinese the sym-

bol for *one* is not horizontal but vertical, that is, exactly the same as the Egyptian, thus |; and for *ten* it is made with a ball in the middle of the vertical stroke, omitting the horizontal; *thirty* made thus and *forty* thus are not in form greatly unlike the Egyptian mode, while the principle is the same; *four* was anciently written thus composed of twice *two;* from which I infer all the numerals of the Chinese to have been originally like those of the Egyptian, which we have traced as far as *seven.*

Ordinals seem also to be formed by the same process in both languages, which consists in placing a certain character before the numeral to change its signification, as before — in Chinese — and a hieroglyph of this form before | in Egyptian both denote *the first;* and so with all the other numbers up to ten. The repetition of an act is indicated by a certain symbol placed after the number, as *thrice* would be expressed in Egyptian by and in Chinese thus , literally, *three* times. Now, while the figure of the characters is different, their order and principle are, in every instance, the same, which are important points in the comparison of languages without an alphabet; and more especially as, in this respect, they resemble no other known language of the world.

There are also numerous symbols drawn exactly alike in both tongues, specimens of which I subjoin, with the Chinese meaning attached, but without the Egyptian, which, I believe, is not yet fixed: they are the composite form of *grass;* *two;* *three;* *a mouth;* *ten;* a whole line on a divided line, like the symbols in the *Yih-king,* the combinations of which will

be explained afterwards; *a spoon;* *to cover;* *luxuriant,* a fine appearance; *great,* which occurs twenty-eight times on Plate 79 of Champollion's collection of Egyptian symbols; *part of;* *to worship;* *a dish.* In Chinese these are significant representations either of external objects or abstract notions; but whether they betoken any thing correspondent in Egyptian must be determined by future researches.

It will be obvious to the intelligent reader, that to do justice to this subject would require a volume; and therefore that the brief space occupied by my remarks can only contain a few specimens of the mode of discussion and illustration, the interesting details of which, as they would constantly accumulate in prosecuting the researches to their legitimate results, must be reserved for a more formal and direct investigation of the points in question. Is it too much to hope, since the importance of such studies is at once admitted, that a portion of the learned of Great Britain, whose empire has so absorbing an interest in Oriental language and literature, will consecrate their abilities and zeal to the cultivation of philology, especially of the symbolical character, as the basis of a more extended acquaintance with the physiology of the human race?

SECTION II.

A SKETCH OF THE ANCIENT HISTORY OF CHINA—CHARACTER OF HER FIRST SOVEREIGNS—RECORDS OF THE DELUGE—LAWS, ANTIQUITIES, AND CUSTOMS OF HER EARLIEST INHABITANTS.

THE immediate origin of nations lies concealed in remote antiquity, accessible only by fables and genealogies, which would be utterly unworthy of attention, were it not that outlines of truth are traced amidst delineations of error, and facts disclosed which incidentally corroborate the divine records. Pretensions to celestial descent, a very high antiquity, or super-human usages, so enthral the reasoning powers, and debase the understandings of civilized Pagans, that the most puerile and absurd fictions propagated by the historian, are believed by the mass of the people. Tradition—the source of information, and basis of historic records, respecting the ancient world—is most uncertain both with regard to the correctness of its communications, and the period during which even true statements remain unadulterated. When occurrences have been committed to writing early, allusions to them in future ages will coincide much more accurately with the original than in cases only supported by oral testimony; and hence, from the early cultivation of letters by the Chinese, their account of the Deluge, though intermingled with fable, may be expected to resemble the unquestion-

able facts of the Mosaic narrative more closely than traditions of the same event among tribes unacquainted with the art of writing. The materials of thought first embodied in composition, would be derived from familiar habits of reflection, present wants and feelings, and attachment to immemorial customs. Notwithstanding the false and foolish systems, superstitious observances, historical and speculative errors, prevalent in nations remote from the first abode of man, they are founded on traditional truth, of which some fragments still remain in the partial resemblance of their parables, proverbs, and customs, to those of sacred Scripture. Evidence on this point is furnished by the Chinese, who carry their historical researches beyond the Flood, and profess to describe occurrences before that catastrophe, which could only be known through the medium of one family. According to their records, *Pwan-koo* was the first person in existence after the separation of the heavens and the earth, between which he lived, whose heights and depths, together with the principles of creation, he had ability to comprehend. He was the original ruler of the world. Some native descriptions represent him as wearing an apron of leaves, and holding the sun and moon in either hand, but say nothing of his creation. Others describe him as an extraordinary personage from the vast deserts, whose origin is unknown, who was four times taller than other human beings, had horns on his head, and teeth protruding out of his mouth. He is said to have taught navigation, made passages through the mountains, and to have reigned as the first king of the human race.

To the government of this imaginary sovereign succeeded three dynasties, denominated, *Teen-hwang-she*, *Te-*

hwang-she, Jin-hwang-she; that is, the imperial families of heaven, earth, and man.

The first (heaven's) dynasty embraced a period of eighteen thousand years, during which thirteen brothers reigned, who were wholly abstracted, inactive, and engaged in constant self-renovation. Certain astronomical characters, denominated "celestial stems," and now used in chronological computation, were, it is said, invented at this æra to determine the length of the year.

During the second dynasty (earth's), comprising the same term of years, eleven brothers reigned, who instituted laws relating to the heavenly bodies, by which day and night were divided, and thirty days assigned to one month.

The third dynasty (man's), extended through a space of forty-five thousand years, during which nine brothers ruled. In this period hills and rivers were separated into nine divisions. Human beings, among whom respectful manners and pure customs prevailed, occupied one territory. The kingly office was not mere pageantry; nor were the functions of state ministers empty titles. Good government was established by rulers, and correct instruction diffused among the people. Males and females originated food and drink.

The three periods into which this fabulous æra was divided, accord in arrangement with the Chinese theory* of creation, which recognizes heaven, earth, and man, as three great powers, by which all inferior things were originally produced.

A native historian,† disputing the chronological statements it involves, reasons in the following manner:—

* The principles of this theory will be explained afterwards.

† See *Kang-keen-e-che*, a native history, in 40 vols., from which the matter in the text has been derived.

"How," he asks, "could ten thousand years and upwards elapse, after the existence of the causative principle, before the male power was begotten, and the heavens were spread abroad; and then a similar period pass away prior to the birth of its female coadjutor, and the formation of the earth, and then another of equal duration precede the union of these creative elements and the generation of all things? and, moreover, a process of operation then take place, requiring from its origin to its completion forty or fifty thousand years, before the sages were born? Is not such a theory in direct opposition to all reason? From Yaou and Shun to the present time includes about three thousand years. The three dynasties, Hea, Shang, and Chow, were not equal in duration to the reigns of Tang and Yu who preceded them; while Han, Tang, and Sung were comprised in a still shorter period. Now if, in the revolutions of time, affairs are not stable more than two or three centuries, how could forty or fifty thousand years revolve after the creation, before aerial elements began to act, human excellence was developed, the waters were separated from the earth, or the people supplied with food? Is it probable these important affairs were in *disorder until the time of the five emperors?* I am of opinion, that Pwan-koo did not long precede Fŭh-he and Shin-nung, perhaps a thousand years, certainly not ten thousand, and that they were succeeded by Yaou and Shun, probably at the distance of a century—assuredly not a thousand years. Every scholar ought minutely to investigate the subject." Choo-foo-tsze, a celebrated historian and philosopher of the twelfth century, remarks of this period, that several things ascribed to it were invented in subsequent ages, and the "stream of time rolled back; it

being impossible to give entire credit to the traditions of those remote ages."

Emerging from mere fable we are still left in much darkness and uncertainty. Three celebrated emperors, it is said, ruled over China in high antiquity, the first of whom commenced his reign B.C. 3369. It is from this period that Choo-tsze, already alluded to, begins his history. The name of this prince was Tae-haou—"excessive splendour," because his perfect holiness and virtue were resplendent as the luminaries of heaven; and Fŭh-he, corrupted from Paou-he, "the sacrificer," because he taught the rites of sacrifice. "In the beginning of human life," says Chinese history, "men and beasts herded together; mankind knew they had a mother, but were ignorant of their father, and followed the impulses of their passions without restraint from polite ceremonies. But Fŭh-he invented nets for fishes, and snares for wild beasts, in the use of which he instructed the people, for the twofold purpose of supplying their wants and procuring victims to offer in sacrifice. He recommended pastoral employments, taught music, and enforced the duty of marriage. He drew eight diagrams, to represent the manner in which the world originated, and to illustrate the changes and combinations in nature during the process of creation. His virtue united supreme intelligence above and subordinate powers beneath. In the heavens were seen celestial resemblances, with splendid figures of birds and other creatures; on the earth, descriptions from dragons and horses, which served as models for his imitation; while midway between heaven and earth was the golden medium or true principle of all things." "Some European writers," remarks Dr. Morrison, "have ventured to call

Fŭh-he the same person as Noah of the west; but as the tradition is that he had no father, was the first to whom mortal reign was given, that his name was *Fung* רוח *ruach, wind, spirit, breath,* perhaps implying that he derived his name from the breath of the Almighty; that he possessed perfect holiness and virtue, resplendent as the glorious lights of the sun and moon, from which his name Tae-paou is taken; that he taught the various useful arts and rites of sacrifice, from which circumstance is derived his name Paou-he, the sacrificer, afterwards corrupted to Fŭh-he; and that his posterity reigned fifteen generations during a period of 17,787 years; according to this tradition he may probably be considered the first of human kind—the Adam of the west, rather than Noah."* Several epithets are given to this sovereign, expressive of the arts and practices which he originated, according to Chinese custom, with regard to inventors of civil or sacred employments: the most interesting, however, is the offerer of sacrifice, since it not only indicates the high antiquity of this species of worship, but confirms the opinion, that sacred usages were diffused by tradition among the ancient nations, of which one of the most important was that of victims offered by the head of the family in his sacerdotal character.

Another personage named Neu-wo-she is supposed to have lived in an early age of the world, whom some affirm to be a divinity, others a sacred female whose power was conspicuous in creation, and others, one whose sex is undetermined, but of the same maternal descent as Fŭh-he. She was born with divine intelligence, and became a conductor of ceremonies preliminary to marriage. She is

* See Morrison's Dictionary, Vol. I. p. 669.

said to have melted stones to repair the heavens, and to have destroyed the successor of Fŭh-he, because he raised a flood of water and spread misery and desolation on the earth. She made wind and stringed instruments, to harmonize aerial elements, assist the gods at solemn rites, and tranquillize the dispositions of men. Since this personage is described as repairing the wastes occasioned by a deluge, her story slightly resembles that of Ovid's Pyrrha, who with Deucalion, the survivors of the poet's flood, restored the human race by casting stones behind them.

Suy-jin-she, sometimes confounded with Neu-wo-she, was the first person, according to tradition, who obtained fire by friction in boring wood, whence he acquired the title "fire producer." The people, who had made some progress in civilization, were still ignorant of cooking, until this individual, by observing the heavenly bodies and investigating the five elements, perceived that the firmament contained fire, and a beautiful wood the property of light. He set apart ten different trees, from which, according to their season, he obtained the element of fire, and taught the people its application to domestic and other purposes; these were—in spring, the elm and the weeping willow; in summer, the date and the almond, for which, in the last month of that quarter, two kinds of mulberry were substituted; in autumn, two species not seasoned, one of a firm, the other of a flexible texture, the latter of which was used also in sacrifices; and in winter, the ash-tree and the sandal-wood. During this period, and by the same person, knotted cords were invented, preliminary to the art of writing, for which it was a substitute; and as a means of government, there were larger or smaller

knots made as the affairs to be remembered were of greater or less moment. Schools of instruction, or rather elevated terraces, open on every side, probably such as were anciently raised at the gates of cities, were now first established, together with the usages of commercial intercourse and traffic by barter.

These records, translated from native history, when compared with their ancient classical literature, supply the opinions of the Chinese on the origin of the universe, its affairs, circumstances, and inhabitants; for which they endeavour to account, by the exercise of their own ingenuity, independently of the statements and reasonings of other nations, as though they were the entire world, in which no human beings but their own ancestors ever possessed an ancient location.

Next on record is Shin-nung, "the divine husbandman," who is considered as the father of agricultural pursuits. He discovered different species of grain, herbs, and medicinal plants; prepared implements of husbandry; taught his subjects to till the soil, and plant it conformably with the seasons. When sickness prevailed he tasted the juices of herbs and trees, and examined the principles of cold and heat. In one day seventy herbs were, by his divine renovation, made into prescriptions to cure all kinds of maladies; hence the healing art is dated from this period. He, moreover, examined fountains, and discriminated sweet waters from those which were bitter. He diffused knowledge among the people, gave them rest from their sorrows, caused their food to strengthen them, and saved them from premature death. The customs of this age were simple, grave, upright, and virtuous. Resentment and strife were unknown. The people brought their mer-

chandize to the markets and shops now first established for barter, and having exchanged it retired to their habitations in peace. This personage, "the divine husbandman," is now worshipped as the patron of those who till the land; and his conduct is imitated by the emperor, who every year sets his hand to the plough, to indicate his desire for agricultural prosperity.

Hwang-te, the next sovereign, was born with divine intelligence, able to speak while an infant, obedient and respectful in youth, grave and sincere in manhood, discerning and sagacious in maturer years. The son of his predecessor was opposed by the nobles of the kingdom, whose rebellion he himself sought to suppress, without intending to usurp the government. But when they offered submission to his authority he accepted it; and then, by cultivating virtue, preparing weapons, promoting discipline, and training wild beasts for war, he quickly subdued all enemies. A partisan of the discarded family opposed him, and sought to bewilder his army in a mist, from which, however, he extricated himself by *a magnetic pole attached to his chariot, which always pointed south;* and, having slain his adversary, received from the congregated nobility public homage as the son of heaven. In this reign *Ta-yaou* invented a system of chronological computation by a cycle of sixty years. It is denominated *hwa-kea-tsze,* the first year of which is computed from the sixty-first of this reign.* It is composed of certain astronomical or horary characters, denominated the ten celestial stems, and the twelve terrestrial branches—the former are keă, yih, ping, ting, woo, ke, kang, sin, jin, kwei; the latter, tsze, chow, yin, maou, shin, sze, woo, we, shin, yew,

* B.C. 2596.

seuh, hae. The terms are applied to years, months, days, and hours; thus kea-tsze denotes the first year of the cycle, and the beginning of the month, or day, because these two are the first characters of the series; that is, keă is the first of the celestial stems, and tsze the first of the terrestrial branches; and thus they proceed regularly to ten, when the celestial numbers being exhausted, the first of them is then united with the eleventh terrestrial, thus *keă-seuh* stand for eleven. The numerical value of the characters depends entirely on their relative position, and may be further illustrated by the characters *woo-seuh*, which denote the thirty-fifth year of the cycle, where *seuh*, that represented *one* in *eleven*, occupies the place of *five*. Were it not that two signs represent single figures under ten, the celestial stems would stand for tens, and the terrestrial for units, changing, however, their value according to their relative position. The number to which the cycle is limited containing just six times the number of celestial signs, and five times the number of the terrestrial, the two last characters in each stand for sixty. The terms of the cycle, which are not used in ordinary enumeration, are applied to the points of the compass, the needle of which is said to point to the south: this instrument appears to have been derived from the magnetic pole anciently attached to chariots, alluded to above, and was probably invented in China at a very early period. The terrestrial branches are also applied to the day, which is divided into twelve periods of two hours each. The first sign, *tsze*, denotes midnight, which embraces the preceding and the subsequent hour, each character being prefixed by *keaou* or *ching;* as *keaou-tsze* denotes from eleven till twelve, and *ching-tsze* from twelve to one—the

first watch of the night; these two characters are placed before the other signs in the same way as *woo*, "the point of noon," preceded by *keaou*; *keaou-woo* would point out the hour from eleven to twelve at noon, and by *ching*, *ching-woo*, from twelve to one o'clock.

Whenever this system was invented it has certainly prevailed throughout many centuries, and deserves attention from every Chinese scholar who would ascertain the chronological matters of the Chinese according to their own arrangement. It was during this reign that *Tsang-hëë-tsee*, minister of state of Hwang-te, invented the symbols of the language, which we have already explained. Persons were appointed to make astronomical observations on the different heavenly bodies, particularly the Great Bear, and to investigate the nature of the five elements—water, fire, metal, wood, and earth. Almanacs were first made, and a sort of armillary sphere prepared to represent the laws and revolutions of the heavenly bodies. Caps were now brought into use, high behind and low in front, whose pendent ornaments prevented the eye from seeing depraved objects, with a provision on each side to guard the ear against slanderous insinuations; diamonds collected on a string of silk, constituted these moral safeguards. Colours employed were black and yellow, in imitation of heaven and earth; flowers of plants and trees were used for dyeing, to distinguish between nobles and plebeians. Chariots, horses, and bullocks began to be used. A temple was erected, in which sacrifices were offered to *Shang-te*, the supreme ruler. Persons were instructed by the queen, *Yuen-fei*, to rear the silk-worm, who arranged the silk it produced for weaving, and supplied garments throughout the

empire; whence after-ages sacrificed to her as originating the nurture of the silk-worm. Chĕ-keang is now the principal province for the cultivation of the mulberry-tree, on which the silk-worm is reared, with which *Keang-nan*, *Hoo-peih*, and *Sze-chuen* are the only provinces that produce fine silk. Further particulars on the care bestowed by the Chinese in nourishing the silk-worm, derived from native authorities, will be introduced in the chapter on natural history.

In this reign cities and towns were built, and governors appointed over them to unite all in harmony. Measures for land were adopted, to sooth irritation and allay discontents among the people. When the emperor died, one of his ministers took his garments, cap, table, and staff into the temple of ancestors, and there sacrificed to his *manes*.

With regard to the next sovereign, nothing worth translating is recorded; we shall therefore pass on to his successor, *Chuen-heun*, a title expressive of his eminent and correct conduct. When fifteen years old he became the minister of his predecessor, and at the age of thirty succeeded him as emperor. He was free from selfish partialities, and diffused substantial benefits throughout his kingdom. His mind was comprehensive enough to embrace distant objects, and sufficiently clear to investigate minute affairs. He obeyed the will of Heaven, and acquainted himself with the necessities of the people. He blended benevolence with dignity, kindness with faithfulness, and cultivated personal virtues, by which he obtained universal homage. His countenance was pleasing, his virtue lofty, and his deportment resembled the motion of the heavenly bodies. Having chosen the golden

medium, he filled his earthly domain with benign influences; so that wherever the sun and moon shone, or wind and rain penetrated, there he received unfeigned submission. He and his queen offered sacrifice to the supreme ruler; after which she bore him a son, from whom the Chow dynasty descended. He prayed again, when he was encouraged by the felicitous omen of a flying swallow, and another son was born to him, who became the source of the Shang dynasty. A red dragon was the omen which appeared when Yaou was born. A fourth son became heir to the throne. He, however, proceeded to unlimited dissipation, and on account of bad government the nobles deposed him, and established Yaou in his stead. This is the ancient chieftain so renowned for his personal excellence and virtuous government. He was a descendant of Hwang-te. Heaven and men having sternly rejected his wicked predecessor, inferior princes acknowledged his sovereignty. He ascended the throne at the age of sixteen; fire was the element chosen to illustrate the virtues by which he reigned, in allusion to the five elements of which the earth is composed. He commanded two astronomers to make almanacs, and celestial instruments for dividing time; to determine the means of supplying an intercalary month, to regulate the four seasons, and to complete the year. Southern barbarians came to court, and presented the emperor with a divine tortoise, occupying a space of more than three cubits, marked on the back like a frog; and bearing historical records from the creation to the present time. Yaou commanded it to be enrolled and designated the astronomical tortoise. In the palace grew a felicitous plant, which put forth a leaf every day, from the first of the

month till the fifteenth; after which it daily shed a leaf until there were but few left, when one leaf was so obstinate as to remain; from which circumstance the decades of every month were ascertained, and the plant denominated "the astronomical plant." The felicitous omens, *Ke-lin*, a male and female fabulous animal, and *fung-hwang*, a male and female bird of the imagination—the phœnix of the Chinese, which always appear in seasons of prevailing virtue, now by their presence bore testimony to Heaven's approbation of the reigning sovereign. When he made a tour through his dominions, the boys sung in the streets, "To support us your multitudinous subjects is your majesty's highest delight; who, without understanding, and in a manner unconscious, obey your majesty's laws." The old men played at the jang,* and sung upon the road, "The sun rises, and we go forth to labour; the sun sets, and we retire to rest: we dig wells and drink; we plough our fields and eat; what is the influence your majesty exerts over us?"† Officers of bordering territories blessed him, and said, "May riches, long life, and many sons, crown your majesty's sacred person." The emperor replied, "Numerous sons cause painful apprehensions; riches involve many cares; and

* The jang was a piece of wood like a shoe, a cubit and four-tenths long, and three-tenths wide. One end was wide, and the other pointed. The boys who played at it in the close of the year, divided themselves into two parties, and laying one jang on the ground, walked with another in the hand to the distance of thirty or forty paces, from whence they threw it at that lying on the ground, and he who inserted the one within the other, won the game.—See Morrison's Dictionary, Vol. I. Part I. p. 558, word *Jang*.

† The songs of the boys and old men indicate the blessings of good government, which was so benign in its aspect that its subjects were almost unconscious of being under any authority. "To play at the jang, and sing, denotes a period of general national prosperity: this custom cannot be adopted on any family or individual occasion of joy."—See Morrison, as above, page 560.

long life meets with much disgrace." His congratulators rejoined, "Heaven having created all people, gives suitable occupations. Where there are many sons, situations will be provided; what need is there of fear? If riches abound, persons can be employed to distribute them; why should trouble be anticipated? The principles, as well as the material objects of the universe, are splendid and glorious. When good doctrines cease to exist, the cultivation of virtue must fail; then your majesty can leave the world to join the immortal genii; and where is the disgrace of ascending a white cloud to associate with the imperial clan?" The Shoo-king speaks of Yaou as acquiring the title "extensive merit," by his devotion to good government. He was reverential, intelligent, cultivated, thoughtful, and withal easy and graceful in his deportment. These virtues were rendered illustrious by his external acts; he scrutinized heaven above, and earth beneath. His exalted virtue was displayed in love for his kindred, to the union of whom in affection an equitable adjustment of national affairs succeeded; and when his own people were enlightened, he then united all provinces in harmony corresponding to the regularity and order of the seasons. In his benevolence he resembled Heaven, in his wisdom a divinity. His presence displayed the splendour of the sun; his deportment the majesty of the clouds. His vast resources were unaccompanied with pride; and his distinguished rank sustained without extravagance. He wore a yellow cap and silken garments; rode in a crimson chariot drawn by white horses. Rushes covered his pavilion, which had not been prepared by art; its beams were destitute of ornament, and the whole structure plain and substantial without pillars. There was no

outward adorning to the carriage in which he went to sacrifice to Heaven. Mats were woven of grass. Soups were not enriched with condiments. Rice and vegetables were served up in earthenware dishes, liquids in earthen vessels. There was no display of gold and silver, pearls and diamonds, embroidered and ornamented silks, or rare and costly articles of any description. Instruments of amusement were disesteemed. Lascivious sounds of music were never heard. The walls of the palace and other apartments had no expensive colouring. Cloth formed the upper, and skins the lower clothing of the body, which, as well as shoes, were not renewed until quite old.

The following account of the Chinese deluge, which occurred in this reign, is translated from the Shoo-king. According to the Chinese system of chronology it happened in the year of the world seventeen hundred and thirteen, which is only fifty-seven years later than the generally received date of the deluge of Moses.

"The emperor Yaou said: 'Vast and destructive are the accumulating waters, which having overflowed their banks, rise so high as to cover the hills, and overtop the loftiest mountains, while they are co-extensive with the spacious concave of heaven. Alas for the mass of the people; who shall relieve them from their calamities?' All replied, 'Behold, Kwăn!' 'Ah no; it cannot be;' answered his majesty; 'he opposes the commands of his superiors, and subverts the nine classes of kindred.' It was remarked by the ministers, 'That is doubtful, try him; perhaps he may succeed.' The emperor said, 'Let him go, then; but be cautious.' He was engaged nine years without accomplishing his task, and eventually atoned for the

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failure by his death. Yu, his son, was next employed, who perfected the great work of removing the flood, and restoring order to the empire. The following dialogue, on the subject of his labours, occurred between Yu and his sovereign. The emperor says, 'Approach the imperial presence, you have abundant communications to make.' Yu worshipped, and said, 'May it please your majesty, how can I speak? My thoughts were unweariedly and incessantly employed day by day. The deluge rose high, and spread wide as the spacious vault of heaven; buried the hills and covered the mountains with its waters, into which the common people, astonished to stupefaction, sunk. I travelled on dry land in a chariot, on water in a boat, in miry places on a sledge, and climbed the sides of hills by means of spikes in my shoes. I went from mountain to mountain felling trees; fed the people with raw food; formed a passage for the waters to the sea on ' part of the empire, by cutting nine distinct beds reparing channels to conduct them to the rivers. aters having subsided, I taught the people to plough ow, who, while the devastating effects of the flood nued, were constrained to eat uncooked food. I ed them to barter such things as they could spare for hers of which they stood in need. In this way the people were fed, and ten thousand provinces restored to order and prosperity. May your majesty now be attentive to the duties and honours of the throne, and rest in the highest point of virtuous government. Think of the secret springs of action. Meditate with delight on supreme excellence. See that your ministers are upright. Rouse them to answer great expectations, and watch the bent of their minds; so will you render indubitable proof

that your authority is derived from the supreme ruler. Heaven has invested you anew with its commands; employ your influence to excite admiration and praise.' 'Ministers,' said the sovereign, 'are my legs and arms, ears and eyes; I desire you, my attendant officers of state, to take charge of the people, and render effective aid. Proclaim my authority to the four quarters of the world, and see it respected. Examine representations of things made by the ancients. The sun, moon, stars, and constellations, mountains, dragons, flowers, and insects, must be painted in groups. Variegated colours in embroidery must be blended to diffuse the five natural colours, blue, red, yellow, white, and black, in external ornaments for dresses; do you explain my wishes. I desire to hear the laws and notes and sounds of music; do you quickly examine and adjust them, that you may issue my orders. Be attentive. If I am in error, correct me. Do not obey in my presence, and reproach me when you retire. Respect the ministers of state. The common people are stupid and slanderous. If they neglect their duty in proper season, be careful to enlighten them. Impress instruction on their memories by blows, and exercise their understandings by writing. I desire that they may live in equal circumstances. Promote industry by my authority, and in proper season. If the people come, assist and employ them; but if they are unwilling, use intimidation.' Yu assented, and replied, 'The emperor enlightens the universe. His illuminating influence extends to the inhabitants of every nook, to the utmost boundaries of the sea, and to the black-haired sacrificers of ten thousand provinces. Only your majesty must be attentive to your ministers. When they are promoted,

let them diffuse instruction in language, and illuminate the people by virtuous examples. Let chariots and official garments be in constant use, and then who will dare to refuse submission? who will presume at any time to disobey your majesty? Let instructions be published as soon as they are received, and a report made of the unworthy.' "

On the death of this emperor, in his hundred and second year, the empire did not revert to his son, but to Shun, who forthwith ascended the imperial throne. His fame first reached his predecessor in the sixtieth year of his age. His filial piety, for which he became so eminently distinguished, was severely tried after the death of his mother, by the inhuman treatment of his father, who, having married again, loved his second wife's children, and hated Shun, whom he not only punished for the most trivial faults, but sought to slay. His step-mother was deceitful, and his younger brother proud; yet his submission and love never sunk below the correct standard. He was dutiful to his parents, and tenderly affectionate to his brother. He cultivated reverence and seriousness until his virtues eventually united his family in harmony, and averted those calamities which their crimes were hastening. Such was his reputation for filial obedience, that when he went to plough at the age of twenty, all the inhabitants of the district where he resided yielded him precedence; similar honours were rendered by fishermen and potters among whom he lived and laboured. He successively raised by his industrious exertions a village, a town, and a city. In the Shoo-king it is said, " If you examine the character of the ancient monarch Shun, you will perceive that it resembles that of his royal prede-

cessor. He was distinguished by profound wisdom, acute intelligence, ornamental and splendid virtues, an amiable and grave deportment, faithfulness and sincerity. From the report of his excellencies, the emperor appointed him to official duties, that he might prove his talents and virtues, and observe his capacity for business. Being able to exemplify the five constant virtues — benevolence, justice, decorum, wisdom, and sincerity — he was promoted to the office of superintending the servants of government, and afterwards created master of ceremonies, on whom it devolved to introduce nobles of the empire at court when they came to do homage for their territories. Commanded by his majesty to explore the recesses of a large forest, and examine the sources of an inundation, he was overtaken by a tremendous storm of thunder and rain, which occasioned general alarm for his safety; but he displayed the superiority of his genius, in escaping without loss of self-possession from dangers which would have overwhelmed ordinary men. Of courage and capacity so unequivocally manifested, the emperor could no longer refrain from expressing his admiration, and rendering an adequate reward. Having therefore summoned Shun to an audience, he thus addressed him: 'I have fully scrutinized your character, rigorously tested your plans for conducting important affairs, and carefully investigated your deliberative councils; I now, therefore, in consideration of your meritorious exertions, declare that three years hence you shall ascend the imperial throne.' Shun humbly declined the honour in favour of one more worthy, and further alleged his want of posterity as an impediment to hereditary succession. His objections, however, being overruled, he assumed the cares and re-

sponsibility of government from Yaou in the ancestral temple. He examined astronomical instruments for the purpose of adjusting the seven ruling powers — the sun and moon; Venus, or the gold star; Jupiter, or the wood star; Mercury, or the water star; Mars, or the fire star; and Saturn, or the earth star — names borrowed from the constituent parts of the earth to illustrate the properties of the most remarkable planets." Allusion is made to a kind of planetarium, made of stone, to represent the motion of the heavens; and to an instrument for observing celestial phenomena. The former is said to be adorned with costly pearls, the latter with diamonds: their names, literally translated from Chinese, are, "the beautiful pearl revolver, and the diamond quadrant." A plate of this instrument is given in the nineteenth volume of an imperial work on astronomy. Shun undertook astronomical duties as first in importance on assuming imperial authority. A great sacrifice was offered to the supreme ruler; one of lesser value, denominated "pure," was presented to the six objects of universal honour — the four seasons, and the male and female power in nature, Yin and Yang: offerings were also dedicated to mountains and rivers, and a tour of respect performed to the whole circle of deities. He collected the five stone seals, which were anciently distributed among the nobles as tokens of security for their faithfulness; had an interview with the local magistrates, and bestowed seals of office on the assembled princes. He undertook a tour of inspection through the different provinces of his empire; promoted uniformity in the revolutions of the seasons by establishing fixed laws; regulated the ceremonies to be observed in prosperity and adversity, military discipline, the rites of

hospitality and marriage, fixed the five valuable stones, which denoted the rank of the nobles; the three pieces of silk, which, being three times dyed in scarlet, constituted their badge of distinction; the two living sacrifices and one dead victim which were to be offered as presents by officers according to their grade. When he had completed the first of his tours, which were made east, south, west, and north, once in five years, he returned to the temple of ancestors and offered bullocks in sacrifice. Then the princes from the four quarters of the empire assembled at court, and presented statements to their sovereign, who with illustrious wisdom examined them by the standard of meritorious exertion, and rewarded the deserving with chariots and robes. He instituted laws with penal sanctions, and relaxed the severity of the five punishments: these consisted in branding the criminal's face with ink, cutting off the nose, taking away the knee-pan, mutilation, and death; for which were substituted flogging, applicable to officers of government; beating, to schoolmasters who neglected their duty; gold, to crimes whose punishment might be commuted for money; in many instances alleviating natural calamities, and exercising his prerogative of mercy by distributing pardons: death was, however, still decreed to murderers and robbers. "Respect this: respect this! and punish offenders tenderly," were the closing injunctions of his majesty's edict. Having transported three criminals, and put to death Kwăn, who failed to remove the waters of the deluge from the earth, tranquillity was restored to the empire. In the twenty-eighth year of Shun's reign, Yaou died, as a leaf falls from the tree and fades away. The people mourned over him as over a parent for three

years; and music was prohibited throughout the territories over which he had reigned. Shun, on the first of the first month, went to the temple of ancestors, and commanded his attendants to throw open the gates of the court, make proclamation to the intelligent and discerning throughout the empire, and invite honest men to enter the service of government. He instructed each governor of the twelve districts into which his territory was divided to supply the people with suitable food in its proper season, to bring distant strangers near by tenderness of treatment, to reverence outward virtue, to be faithful to sound principles, and to exercise forbearance under difficult circumstances; then barbarians would all yield submission. He, moreover, inquired who was able to spread abroad the principles of the golden medium, and render illustrious the annals of their sovereign. Nine officers of government were immediately appointed; among whom Yu, who repaired wastes and disorders occasioned by the deluge, was elevated to the station of prime minister; the next in rank presided over the agricultural department; the third, was president of the board of instruction; the fourth, criminal judge; the fifth, director of public works; the sixth, commissioner of woods and forests, or, more literally, mountains and marshes, with a special injunction to take care of the imperial park; the seventh, master of religious rites in the temple of ancestors, on whom it devolved to see proper ceremonies observed, and the gods worshipped according to rank and precedence; the eighth, superintendent of music, whom the emperor enjoined to instruct his eldest son, and to be sincere, but mild; benignant, and withal firm; unyielding, yet not tyrannical; and great without pride. "Poetry," said he, "is the

language of the heart; the expressions of song are eternal; its sounds never fail; its notes and laws combine harmoniously, without interruption or discord: music has the power of uniting men and gods in mutual concord." His minister remarked, "If I were to play upon sonorous stones, the very beasts of the forest would respond to my music by dancing;" like another Orpheus, who by the sweetness of his song allured woods and rocks, with their animated inhabitants, to follow him: the ninth, promulgator of imperial edicts, to whom his majesty declared, "I hate slanderous speech and cruel conduct which agitate and alarm my people. I require you, morning and evening, to issue my commands: only be faithful." In his second year, the emperor sought persons of virtue and talent to become imperial censors, who should assist him in the correct discharge of his duties, by a faithful representation of his foibles and imperfections. He examined his servants once in three years, to excite their attention, on the principle that human nature, when liberal, must enlarge its beneficence, and when excessively stern must relax its severity. Those who had sunk into obscurity by want of exertion he degraded, and promoted such as had rendered themselves eminent by virtuous deeds, rewarding or punishing according to intelligence and truth. Shun spent thirty years of his life in private; thirty in an official station; sat upon the throne fifty; and died at the age of an hundred and ten years.

If the character of the ancient illustrious Yu be examined, it will be seen in his aiding the emperor to diffuse instruction throughout his dominions. It is said, princes are able to sympathize in the troubles of princes; mi-

nisters can appreciate the difficulties of ministers. Government is powerful; the people respect virtue. The emperor says, "Be sincere and complaisant. Let your words be excellent without tediousness. Subdue rustics without exposing the virtuous, and all lands will live in harmony. Extend your investigations to the people at large. Sacrifice your own interests to promote the good of others. Refrain from tyrannical behaviour towards those who have none to speak for them. Do not distress the wearied and exhausted. The emperor only possesses ability at all times." Yih says, "May it please your majesty, your virtue, Sire, revolves in an extended circle. You are holy; you are divine; you are a military and civil ruler. Imperial Heaven's high behests have decreed to you the dominion of the four seas: your majesty is constituted prince of the earthly territory." Yu says, "As the shadow follows its substance, and the echo reverberates the sound, so surely will felicity attend the virtuous, and misery overtake the rebellious." Yih says, "Guard against unforeseen evils; do not fail to respect the laws. Abstain from voluptuous ramblings, and lascivious sounds of music. Be sincerely virtuous, not double-minded. Abandon depraved practices without hesitation; and discard doubtful plans. In all your anxieties for prosperity be luminous. Do not resist good principles for the sake of acquiring popular praise, nor oppose the people to promote selfish gratification. Be neither haughty nor extravagant, and barbarians from all quarters will come under your gentle sway." Yu says, "According to the emperor's reflections, virtue is chiefly displayed in good government, which consists in nurturing the people, cultivating each of the original elements—water, fire, metal, wood, earth, and

grain, and uniting together in harmony a correct moral deportment, an economical use of essentials, and proper respect for life. These nine praiseworthy acts should be celebrated in song according to their order and importance. Instruct with mildness, rule with authority, and exhort in verse that impending ruin may be averted."

The emperor says, "Well; earth is adjusted, and heaven is completed. The six physical elements and three important moral principles, guided by a sincere government, will give eternal repose to ten thousand ages, during which there will be a constant succession of meritorious deeds. I now elevate you to my royal pavilion and imperial seat; I have reigned thirty-three years, and at the age of ninety am wearied with diligent study. See that you rule my people without pride." Yu says, "My virtue is inadequate to the task. I cannot inspire the people with confidence. Kaou-Taou is supereminent in virtue, and will diffuse its benignant influences among the people, whose hearts will cherish it. Oh, let the emperor deliberate; oh, think of this man. Select him. Fame speaks of him. Sincerity recommends him. May your majesty reflect on his merit." The emperor replied, "Kaou-Taou is only the minister of the people; do not mention him. Go you and discharge your official duties correctly. Illustrate the five kinds of punishment, originally instituted to aid instruction, and abolish the necessity of inflictions. Promote harmony among the people, the centre of which is the golden medium; whose meritorious works will then be seasonable, and their minds fully engaged in virtuous actions." Kaou-Taou says, "The emperor's virtue is free from defect or error. He carries himself towards inferiors with condescension and grace,

governs the multitude on generous principles, nor suffers punishments to affect immediate posterity, though he transmits rewards of virtue to distant ages. Where transgressions are not heinous he bestows pardon, and inflicts punishments only for heavy crimes. An alleged offence of doubtful character he considers trivial, but dubious merit meets with an important recompense. He would rather the law should be infringed with impunity than that an innocent man should suffer. Tender regard for human life is a virtue which deeply imbues the minds of his subjects, who are hence careful not to offend against constituted authorities." "Your praise," said his majesty, "has no other effect than to stimulate my natural desire to exercise beneficent government, and to diffuse salutary influences among the people by a gracious example." Addressing Yu, he said, "When the devastating waters terrified me, you perfected your claim to sincerity and faithfulness by the accomplishment of renowned deeds. Virtue and ability to serve your country with diligence, and to practise economy in domestic matters, rests with you alone. Without self-sufficiency or ostentatious, hypocritical pretensions, you stand pre-eminent in moral worth. No subject will dispute unconquerable power, or contend against unrivalled success. The object of my encouragement is moral excellence; the theme of my praise, distinguished merit. Numbers, which determine the movements of the heavenly bodies, depend for their arrangement on your person. You must ascend the imperial throne. There is nothing more dangerous than the human mind, nothing more subtle than the principles of reason. Analyze them with the utmost delicacy of attention and singleness of purpose, that you

may sincerely apprehend and faithfully preserve the due medium. Neither listen to words which evince want of discrimination; nor adopt plans destitute of sage counsel. No object of love can be dearer to a people than their prince, nor can a prince's fears be roused except by his subjects. Whom will the multitude respect if they do not venerate their sovereign? and how can a prince defend his territories except in conjunction with his people? Consider these things. Carefully uphold the dignity of the throne. Let your respect and care surpass the most ardent expectations in times of public distress, and Heaven will vouchsafe eternal prosperity. Out of the mouth alone proceeds peace or war. My words shall not be repeated." Yu replied, "Meritorious ministers must be sought by divination, and felicitous omens attentively regarded." The emperor commands: "Examine the appearances of the prognostic; but conceal your previous purposes, and let the decree be regulated by the indications of the great tortoise. My inclination is pre-determined; all its deliberations and schemes agree; demons and gods accord with them; the tortoise and spells harmoniously unite.* Divination is not habitually felicitous." Yu worshipped, bowed his head, and would have firmly refused the honour; but the emperor insisted on his acquiescence.

In the first month of the year, Yu received Heaven's decrees in the divine sanctuary, at the head of all state officers, according to the ceremony observed when his present majesty assumed the government, by whom he was admonished to consider constantly the state of the

* For illustration of this sentiment see chapter on Divination.

Meaou,* not to become their leader, but to subjugate them. Yu and the assembled princes of the empire administered an oath to the soldiers, whom his majesty thus admonished: "Ye numerous multitudes, listen to my commands. Those Meaou are doltish, stupid, and confused, destitute of reverence, contemptuous, self-righteous tribes, who oppose divine reason, and subvert the principles of moral excellence. According to their notions, the mean man occupies the throne, and the philosopher dwells only among rustics. Such people are accursed, placed beyond the pale of protection, and fit objects of divine vengeance. I charge you all, in these instructions, with the punishment of transgressors. Mental power consists in unity of purpose, which is the source and strength of official merit."

During thirty days the Meaou opposed government edicts. Yih presented a congratulatory address to the Emperor, saying, "Heaven is acted upon by virtue alone, to whose influence no limit can be assigned. Self-sufficiency incurs suffering, humility is fraught with blessings. Undeviating constancy marks the pathway of Heaven. The emperor† commenced his virtuous career in Leih Shan, where, as he went to his daily labour, he invoked the mournful heavens, weeping audibly, on behalf of his parents, whose sins he would fain bear on his own back, and thus expiate. He had an interview with his old blind father, which was conducted on his part with gravity and reverence, fear and trembling; while the parent, melted by such filial tenderness into complacency and

* A tribe of mountaineers, supposed to be the aborigines of China, who are still a distinct people.

† *i. e.* Shun.

respect, with the utmost sincerity gave thanks to the gods: and if he was so overcome by one who had been obnoxious to him, how much more will these wild mountaineers submit to the authority of your majesty?" Yu respectfully bowed to these splendid sayings, and said, "Marshal my armies, and arrange the tribes in order. If his majesty diffuses instruction, extends ornamental learning and virtue, and encourages such court amusements as dancing, fencing, and the masquerade, which will sustain suitable rank between host and guest, in seventy days the Meaou will yield entire submission." Kaou-Taou's counsels are: "Tread sincerely in the paths of virtue. Devise intelligent plans, and procure harmonious ministers." To the inquiry of Yu, how these things might be accomplished, he replied: "By diligent attention to personal habits, and ceaseless efforts to improve the understanding. Sincerely respect the nine degrees of consanguinity. The people around you being illumined, and treated with cordiality, those who are distant will feel the benign influence of your gracious conduct. Prosperity depends on three things—acquaintance with human nature; a tranquil government; and obedience to the order of the seasons. The emperor alone knows the difficulties which attend these duties. A correct knowledge of mankind involves intuitive wisdom, and an able, pacific government embraces principles of genuine benevolence. When ability, intelligence, and goodness preside over a flourishing community, from what source can trouble arise? Why abdicate the throne for the sake of the Meaou? Why fear deceitful words, a specious countenance, and a fair exterior? Virtuous conduct is divisible into nine orders of human excellencies: bene-

volence tempered with sternness, gentleness with decision, sincerity with reverential feeling, love of propriety with external respect, sedateness with magnanimity; a straightforward but conciliating deportment; generosity without extravagance; bravery united with solidity, and fearlessness with justice. O how auspicious will be the reign in which all these virtues are constantly illustrated! Daily proclaim the three virtues, that the magistrates may morning and evening exemplify them. Sternly venerate and respect the six virtues. Enlighten the nobles. Cherish harmony and diffuse instruction. The nine virtues are adequate to comprehend every affair. Talent and ability should distinguish officers of government, whose province it is to direct the multitude. Workmen should labour in due season, and in harmony with the five elements, and then the whole routine of meritorious deeds will be accomplished. Impart no instruction to wandering rakes, who desire to obtain the government of a province for their own gratification. The prince must be attentive to his duties, and guard against the ten thousand circumstances which come daily before him. He must not be unmindful of public servants. Labourers are employed by heaven, on behalf of which the emperor rules. Laws attached to the celestial orders comprise bonds subsisting between prince and minister, father and son, younger and elder brother, husband and wife, and mutual friends, which agree with our five precepts and five objects of veneration. How useful are the ordinances of heaven, derived from ours, and consummated in union and reverence and perfect harmony! The decrees of heaven favour the excellent. Heaven punishes the guilty according to our five penal

inflictions, and five kinds of transportations. O how magnificent are the affairs of government! The perspicacity and intelligence of heaven accord with the perspicacity and intelligence of my people; its intelligent fear agrees with their illustrious veneration, and diffuses itself through the upper and lower ranks of society. Oh, what respect is due to officers of government!"

The reader has been detained longer on these translations than their intrinsic excellence perhaps would warrant; because, while the sentiments conveyed are of remote origin, they support an immense fabric of political power and social influence raised by the government of China on the ruins of natural liberty, and cemented by degrading superstitions, moral debasement, and mental servitude, which mark the present condition of her multitudinous inhabitants. If we ascribe any real existence to the ancient chieftains who have passed under review, they must be considered as belonging to the infantile population of the world. Their system of instruction bears characteristics of originality, both melancholy and interesting. It is divested of all dependence on revealed communications respecting the early state of man; and yet, amidst the vagaries of superstition and the seductions of error, truth faintly indicates its native dignity and majesty. The first remarkable point of attention is, a selfish seclusion in which they enwrap themselves, without a thought that other human beings might claim a kindred origin, or that it was of any moment whence barbarians had sprung, who occupy the outskirts of the celestial territory. Their contemptuous sovereignty over all being forbids admission to the principle that nations descended from the same source must be equal in dignity of origin,

and if now degraded in the scale of creation their progenitors cannot but share the imputed debasement; or that if of independent descent, which is more in accordance with Chinese theory, it may, in all probability, be equally honourable. Heaven and earth are immediately concerned in their own origin, with which they identify the commencement of human operations; and the first person to whom mortal reign is entrusted was mysteriously united to the unknown something which produced, pervades, and controls the visible universe. Their doctrine of a First Cause seems to have given rise to the idea of sovereignty in one person, or rather, was it not invented to sanction his authority? since he professes to take heaven and earth as his pattern, and employs the phrase "Father heaven," and "Mother earth," to denote the conjoint sources of his power and influence, from which he derives the appellation Heaven's Son as his characteristic title. Heaven, according to this system, is especially attentive to the conduct of human beings, while its purposes may be changed, its decrees reversed, and its determination to punish revoked by incessant exertions of virtuous beings on earth in resolute persevering penitence; but if justice with regard to great criminals be long delayed, or not allowed to follow its natural and righteous course, a way is equally opened for the judgment of heaven to descend, as when distinguished excellence is not adequately rewarded. Their idea of the world, a term applied to their own territory, is that of a family under the governance of one irresponsible head, which constitutes the basis of their theory of government. He is said to reign, either in conjunction with heaven, or by its authority, or as its deputy to fulfil its commands,

execute its penal decisions, and by his virtuous influence sway the destinies of its subjects. The period which we have been contemplating, includes what the Chinese denominate the highest and upper antiquity,—two out of three periods which come between the fabulous age and that of Confucius: the first comprises the imperial heaven, earth and man's reign, which extends to the times of Fuh-he, who lived above eleven hundred and forty years before Yaou's deluge; the second, from Fuh-he to Yaou, who flourished seventeen hundred years before Confucius, whose age is the boundary of the third or last division of antiquity, which preceded the Christian æra by five hundred years. In this latter period the catastrophe of the deluge occurred, from whose survivors a description of it was transmitted by tradition to all parts of the world, as we learn from nations early accustomed to record their own origin and progress. Some expressions in the Shooking are remarkably similar to those of the Mosaic narrative: both accounts represent the flood as gradually rising above the highest mountains. The Chinese, however, do not allude to the sources of this calamity, nor to the resting-place of the people during the prevalence of the waters. Yu—their Noah—is celebrated for his painful and successful labour in directing the waters to their proper channels, and laying out the country in districts to be cultivated and taxed agreeably to the quality of the soil. Names are appended to the supposed scene of his exertions with tedious minuteness; but no modern observations or researches can discover the locality of those nine boundaries into which, according to ancient tradition, he divided the empire. The term "nine regions," which is still applied to the Chinese empire, has been derived,

together with the fiction of the actors in the scene, from obscured remnants of scripture fact, disseminated by Noah and his family among their descendants. Yu is said to have been so intent upon his work, that during his employment in adjusting the waters he thrice passed his own door without entering it, and turned a deaf ear to the cries of his son and the entreaties of his wife. He is therefore celebrated in the writings of philosophers as a pattern of self-denial. In the time of Yu wine was first made by E-Teih; but when Yu drank of it and relished its flavour, he banished its maker, and prohibited the luxury, remarking, that in future ages nations would be ruined by it. *"At this period heaven rained down gold for three days:"* this absurd statement as a grave historical fact probably took its rise from the element by which Yu reigned, which was metal or gold. He died at the age of one hundred years.

The following inferences seem to be fairly deducible from the preceding statements.

First, irrespective of the absurd statements of the fabulous æra, the Chinese monarchy is of very high antiquity; secondly, though the succession to the throne be hereditary, an eminently virtuous subject was in ancient times frequently preferred to a profligate heir; thirdly, the practice of the sovereigns of that remote period, in raising a successor to the throne during their own lifetime, has been imitated in modern times, as, for example, by Kéén-lung, who, having reigned sixty-one years, resigned the throne to its next heir; fourthly, though the events narrated above are no doubt indebted for many particulars to the writers of later times, the sentiments and conduct of those ancient chieftains have been revered in all sub-

sequent ages, as models of virtuous government and practice; fifthly, the tradition of the deluge, so nearly resembling that of Moses in description and chronology, corroborates our faith in the sacred narrative, and evinces the high antiquity of Chinese records. Some have, indeed, attempted to prove that the account in the Shoo-king refers only to a local inundation produced by excessive rains; but both natives and foreigners have been much perplexed to explain its causes, and the means of removing it; moreover, it would be unlikely that such peculiar expressions should be applied to what, at least in ancient times, was no uncommon occurrence, if nothing more were intended by the writer than to describe a periodical overflow of some river. Sixthly, the Meaou-tsze, referred to in the extracts from the Shoo-king, still exist in the heart of China, occupying its mountains and fastnesses, whence they occasionally issue to make irruptions on the inhabitants of the plain. Is not this a strong circumstance in favour of the opinion that they are the aborigines?

SECTION III.

THE THREE SECTS—SENTIMENTS ON THE FIRST CAUSE—NATURE OF THEIR DIFFERENT SYSTEMS—PRACTICAL INFLUENCE.

FABLES, metaphysical disquisitions, and simple narrative, are so blended together in Chinese histories, that it is difficult to ascertain their respective limits. In the former chapter we described ancient worthies, who have been held in devout esteem from time immemorial through successive ages, for the excellent principles they adopted for their own guidance, and enforced on the observance of others. This was evidently the golden age of the Chinese. Allusions were there made to the First Cause, and to the origin of the world, which will now be discussed.

The original, abstract, principle of causation, denominated Tae-keih, is represented in Chinese authors by a circle, or by a circle enclosing a waving line from the top to the bottom, which is also an ancient symbol of the sun. When this principle was in motion, it produced a male power, and when it was at rest a female power; from whose united operations four visible forms were generated, which represent, by eight diagrams, innumerable combinations and transmutations in nature, resembling the Pythagorean system of accounting for the origin of the universe. Tae-keih means the great limit, or extreme principle of analysis, which is one and indivisible; yet

diffused throughout nature by necessary existence;—a sort of Pantheism, and yet not divided. *Oneness* is its only property in common with the God of Divine Revelation, except the notion of infinitude or eternity may be supposed to attach to the phrase Woo-keih, no limit, employed by other writers to express the same idea. Neither of the terms, however, indicates natural or moral perfection—not even the attribute of intelligence or wisdom—so graciously suited to man's guilt and dependence—so honourable and glorious to God in his revealed character; while the properties of benevolence and mercy are without shadow of representation in this baseless fabric. Truth—supported by the eternal sanctions of holiness and justice, which shed a heavenly light around its moral beauty, and distinguished by the wisdom of its communications, the unchangeableness of its purposes, and the amplitude of its provision for man as an immortal being—is unrepresented, except in the fictions of a vain imagination, and the reasonings of debased intellect. Holiness, such as it is described to be in this system, is destitute of living perfection, and unconnected with deeds of infinite purity; consequently, it strikes no salutary terror into the guilty mind. Justice, unattended with penal sanctions, based on the known determination of the Judge of all the earth to do right, excites no lively apprehension of future retribution. Wisdom and power, limited to the operation of mere abstract existences, bearing the name without the substance of properties appropriate only to the eternal God, furnish subjects of unintelligible declamation to the ignorant, and of profound mysticism to inquiring minds, in which they are perplexed and confounded.

The dual power, evolved from this original principle, was the next order of existence generated, prior to the production of all things. It was denominated Yin and Yang, terms which signify male (Yang), and female (Yin), "light and darkness, perfection and imperfection, manifestation and obscurity, good and evil, the source of existence and the cause of decay;" and may be said to bear some resemblance to the two ancient principles in nature, which the Manichæans recognized as the origin of all the virtue and vice prevalent on earth. Other influences and acts, attributed to these primary energies, are not dissimilar to those which the ancient Egyptians ascribed to their two principal deities, Osis and Osiris. These, it will be remembered, are appropriated by that people to the sun and moon.* For if, as it has been supposed, the Egyptians derived some of their immoral practices, such as their incestuous marriages, from the depraved example instituted by the gods, so it is equally probable that many of the licentious abominations and cruel practices of the Chinese are referrible to the sexual intercourse alleged to subsist between this male and female power in nature; the result of whose conjoined operations is not only seen in the productions, animate and inanimate, of the air, the earth, and the sea, but, moreover, in the influence which the theory exercises over their whole social system. Every thing masculine is invested with the highest excellence, every thing feminine treated with the most contemptuous disdain. Arts, ceremonies, accomplishments, and the ordinary intercourse of life, ought to be regulated by this fancied two-fold division of the Supreme Power. Printing uses its masculine

* See preceding chapter.

and feminine letter according to prescribed rules. The notes of music are divided into male and female, and require to be properly blended, according to the principles of Yin and Yang, before their combination can produce complete harmony. In the preparation of a feast the respective pre-eminence and subordination of these powers is distinguished, by the inferior dishes occupying the place appropriated to Yin, and the superior that which belongs to Yang. Passing the distinctions created by this theory, to the prejudice of the female in favour of the male among animals, its influence may be noticed as most injurious to the feminine part of the human species. It certainly countenances, if it did not originate, female infanticide; for while the design to avoid the care and expense of bringing up children may be considered as the primary motive, yet why do not sons participate with daughters in a common fate, if there be no assignable ground of preference for one sex more than the other? And where life is spared, the same sentiment dooms the female to subjection and degradation, as possessed of inferior powers of mind, and of immeasurably less importance in the scale of being than man. This notion need not excite much surprise, since the male power in nature receives various designations descriptive of eminence, and the female invariably those which denote inferiority. If, for example, the term which denotes the male power be supreme heaven, the counterpart to this will be subordinate earth, as expressive of the female. The superior of these powers, by whatever name it is distinguished, rules in heaven and controls celestial objects, while the inferior, which is the female, governs on earth and directs terrestrial things. The term by which the Chinese de-

signate the gods, spirits, and good angels, is said to be the soul of the male power; while that which distinguishes the animating principle of the female, is applied to demons and evil spirits. The same word Shin, when used to denote a kind of ethereal essence, has its respondent inferior element, denominated Ke, "breath or vapour." Indeed, whatever exists in the universe is the property of the one or other of these elementary powers, and has its corresponding office in the social and physical economy. This theory, moreover, affects the moral systems of the Chinese, virtues and vices in their various classes being arranged according to this fanciful division of the originating powers.

The theory of a triad power uniting in one essence to create all things, and separating into distinct personages successively to rule the world in its first ages, has exercised considerable influence over the religious systems now prevailing in China; and why should it be thought improbable that some at least of these notions, though now enveloped in the grossest error, were originally derived from revealed facts, through the darkened medium of tradition? Pagan countries advanced beyond barbarism, embody superstitious tenets in their religious code, varying in character according to the degree of civilization and refinement to which they have attained. In the absence of an infallible standard of faith, the principles and precepts of which are recognized as altogether obligatory, systems of restraint must be devised to aid the authority of rulers, and secure the subordination of subjects; to attract the thoughtful few, who scrutinize the causes of things, and satisfy the unthinking many, who seek the gratification of sense, regardless whether those legends

on which their enjoyments rest, agree or disagree with the principles of reason.

The designations *philosophical*, *fabulous*, and *political*, applied to the prevailing forms of superstition in China, may serve to point out their distinctions; although neither of these appellations is exclusively appropriate to any one of the Chinese systems, of which, it is well known, the three principal are, the sect of *Reason*, the sect of *Fŭh*, and the sect of the *Learned*. Confucius's ethics are, indeed, with propriety designated political; but they also involve pretensions to moral philosophy and metaphysical learning. Buddhism patronises childish and absurd ceremonies, but intermingles therewith the doctrines of the sages. The sect of Reason, with a title which promises exercise to metaphysical acumen, has its mystic fables and topical deities to gratify the feelings of the people. Since these sects are recognized by the state, and their votaries constitute almost the entire mass of its subjects, I cannot, perhaps, in pursuance of my plan, more advantageously represent the moral and intellectual condition of China, than by incorporating the floating sentiments of tradition, on the three great powers of nature, now the subjects of historic record, together with the opinions held respecting each of these primary energies by the "Three Sects," for the purpose of exhibiting at one view various notions of Heaven as the First Cause, of Earth as the second, and of Man as the third.

The sect of Taou, Reason, was founded by Laou-keun-tsze, who flourished about five hundred years prior to the Christian æra, and was contemporary with Confucius. It uses remarkable language to indicate the origin of its founder. He is described as the great, supreme,

three-fold source, consisting of three personages, of whom the most honourable dwells in heaven bestowing happiness; the next in rank grants forgiveness of sin on earth; while the inferior rules the waters, and delivers from impending calamities: yet these three sages are but one first cause—that is, the one indivisible monad, to which we have already referred, called Tae-keih. This triune power presiding in heaven over assembled divinities and rulers, the sun, moon, stars, and constellations, despatches a celestial messenger to announce the pardon of sin, infinite happiness, and complete deliverance from evil, to all who shall recite his precious name with many magnificent epithets superadded. He is considered as the restorer of reason, who has by incarnation assumed some form or other in seven different periods, from the highest antiquity down to the æra of his residence on earth, and subsequently as late as the sixth century. Other deities are worshipped; such as the supreme ruler, the northern emperor, the god of fire, the god of births; but the principal divinities are the "three pure ones," united in one abstract essence, of which eternal reason is the basis and characteristic. This principle resembles in several particulars the λόγος of the Greeks, as it has been explained by the school of Plato. It not only, in order of existence, preceded the heavens and the earth, but is also regarded as the creating source of matter; and seems, likewise, not dissimilar to the pervading principle of that philosopher, which inheres in matter and animates living beings. The Scripture reader will recognize in these opinions remnants of revealed truth, obscured indeed and mutilated by tradition as accumulating ages separated the members of the human family from the only correct source

of information, but still not without traces of original verity.

The sect of Füh also recognizes "three precious ones," as the supreme object of adoration; these are—the past, the present, and the future; a sort of divided eternity, deified without reference to personal attributes or perfections, either moral or natural, except infinite existence be regarded as the essence of this three-fold period. It was introduced from India about the close of the first century after Christ; but since it acknowledges gods many and lords many, no light is reflected on the character and communications of a Supreme Being. Its principal divinities are goddesses; one of whom is represented with many arms, indicative of her power to save; another is the patroness of childless women, and holds an infant before her; a third superintends children who are ill of the small-pox; a fourth is the goddess of mercy, which is in the highest degree popular; together with innumerable other feigned deities, presiding over individual, local, and national interests, all which combine to stifle the voice of natural conscience, shroud the human understanding with impenetrable darkness, and destroy those moral sensibilities which might have been excited and cherished by meditating on the works of creation, on the ways of Providence, and on traditional information derived from the original depositaries of God's will. The mysticism of the former sect and the absurdities of this, are equally erroneous; but the latter being more popular, possesses greater power of doing mischief. No idea of God approaching to correctness has been retained, since the outlines of truth, communicated by the immediate descendants of Noah, were effaced from the minds of their

posterity; nor, independently of Divine revelation, have correct sentiments of God ever been acquired; even where reason, with all its boasted sufficiency of wisdom, has been invoked as the tutelary deity. And if notions of God worthy in some degree of his character and perfections be not impressed on the human mind, we look in vain, not only for rational deportment from man towards the Supreme Being, but also for suitable behaviour to his fellow-man in the varied duties of life. The wisest pagan nations afford convincing evidence of the truth of this statement. Egypt, renowned throughout the ancient world for its wisdom, the extent of which is noticed by inspiration, multiplied its objects of worship from animals and vegetables, until nature itself teemed with deities. China, apart though it has long been from intercourse with Christian countries—is thought by some to be a model of excellence in its simple patriarchal worship; but it has evidently been extolled without reason; since its paternal character, apparent in outward forms, is really merged either in idolatrous superstitions or atheistical materialism. Thus, in these two illustrious instances, China and Egypt, wisdom with regard to the character of the First Cause, has degenerated into folly of the most unseemly kind, affording additional testimony to the important truth, that "the world by wisdom knew not God."

The sentiments of Confucius, whose philosophy is usually considered both as more rational and more practical than that of Laou-tsze, with whom he was contemporary, are very peculiar with regard to the First Cause, which he variously designates reason, heaven, supreme ruler, supreme heaven, and heaven and earth. The indiscriminate

application of these terms to widely different objects and systems, creates considerable confusion in the mind of the uninitiated reader. Taou, which may be called the Logos of China, in addition to the sense already adverted to, as belonging to the first of the three sects, is employed by the Buddhists to point out a particular state of existence, relating to the metempsychosis, whether among human beings or brutes. Confucius and his followers, who constitute the sect of the learned, attribute more epithets descriptive of an eternal being to Taou, than to any other term by which the Chinese denote the first cause. It is represented as eternal, unchangeable, creative, omnipresent—so vast that it fills the universe, so minute that it is contained in all things. It is the source of the changes which occur in nature, and takes precedence of heaven and earth; and in comparison with it not only man, but these creative powers also, are liable to err, and by their aberrations to violate its authority. In the mundane system of the Chinese it is elevated into a divinity, whence issued heaven, earth, man, and all natural objects; still, however, it is not invested with personal properties. The same word signifies a way or path, both morally and physically, which, preceded by heaven (heaven's path), indicates the Supreme Being's procedure towards mankind, and conveys an idea approaching to the Christian's notion of Divine Providence. This term with the sense—method of access—ascribed to it, coupled with its alleged prerogative as the source of all things, animate and inanimate, indicating, as it must do, the seat of vitality, the living energy itself, together with the signification of *word*, or *medium of communication*, expresses a remarkable coincidence of properties appropriated by

the Saviour to himself, or ascribed to him by his inspired servants—"I am the *way*, the *truth*, and the *life*:" "In the beginning was the *word*."

This word is used by the same school to indicate doctrine—a system of metaphysical principles and moral precepts—and in this sense generally stands connected with *le*, which means reason, in its recondite, abstract, divisible state; while *taou* denotes principles embodied in actions and conduct, which are the result of a deliberate operation of the understanding; hence its appropriateness to express the sense of the term doctrine or truth.

Confucius represents heaven as an object of supreme veneration, which, according to popular opinion, bestows blessings, and inflicts judgments, guides the steps of men, and frustrates or promotes human designs, agreeably to its sovereign counsels. But philosophical definitions by later writers invest it with no other attribute than uncreated materialism, destitute of the intelligence necessary to a sagacious mind or controlling agency, and diffused throughout the universe as an indivisible principle, otherwise called *tae-keih*, "the highest point;" or *woo-keih*, "no point"—the original limit beyond which the mind cannot reach. It is also explained by *le*, alluded to above, as an innate principle of primary matter, which when organised is designated by *sing*, "nature." I never could learn that attributes of wisdom, power, eternity, or immutability, were applied to heaven; although the sage says he has long prayed to heaven, and describes an offence against that power as taking away the resource of prayer from the offender. What, then, it will be asked, is the notion attached to heaven? I should say, precisely the

same as that attached to fate by the ancient Greek tragedians and philosophers.

A native commentator on the term, explains it by reason —the innate principle of order inhabiting matter—synonymous with first cause. The sage considered himself as employed by heaven to promulgate its sacred doctrines throughout the universe; and yet he seldom spoke of the divine decrees, a future state, or religious worship. Heaven, when used metaphysically, conveys a very different idea from that of the firmament, with which, however, it is often confounded. Its extension as a canopy over the earth, in conjunction with which it is worshipped, is the probable reason of its alleged ubiquitous influence, its supreme honour, and unequalled dominion. "It is improper," says a disciple of Confucius, "to accuse nature of wanting intelligence, and equally incorrect to identify its mental operations with those of man. Who can imagine that a person is appointed, on the part of heaven, to judge crimes, and determine their punishment? Yet who will have the hardihood to deny the exercise of absolute control?" To an anxious inquirer, whether the azure heavens exercise supreme, intelligent government; or the First Cause—devoid of a designing mind—be merely a principle of order inferred from tracing things up to their origin, such philosophy presents no satisfactory solution. Notwithstanding the indefinite sentiment entertained of heaven, the Chinese insist much on its absolute power in ordaining their present condition, and controlling their future destiny; the inexorable operation of whose decrees are pleaded in apology for guilty indifference to the life and property of a neighbour, which is suffered to

perish in the flames or in the water without effort to save it. Life and death, riches and honours, depend, it is averred, on the decree of heaven, which, like wise sayings of great men, is an object of profound veneration with virtuous minds. Confucius, on occasion of the death of a favourite pupil, exclaimed, "Heaven has ruined me! Heaven has ruined me!" Mencius, in reply to an inquirer, who asked whether Yaou did not confer the government of the empire on his successor, denied that it was in his power to do so, when the following conference ensued between them, in which the philosopher is respondent. "Who, then, disposed of it?" "Heaven." "In what manner? with reiterated distinct commands?" "No: Heaven revealed its will not in words, but by conduct and circumstances." "What do you mean?" "The emperor had the prerogative to introduce, or recommend, a person to heaven, but had no power to determine its choice: heaven, however, approved Shun, and the people unanimously received him." "How does that appear?" "When he presided over the imperial sacrifices, the gods graciously accepted his offerings in token of heaven's approbation; and when he assumed the direction of public affairs, tranquillity prevailed among the people indicative of their good will: it was not, therefore, the emperor, but heaven and man who had the disposal of the vacant throne." Hence while heaven is appealed to first in a system of universal government directed by this power in conjunction with man, the latter in reality takes precedence, according to the sentiment generally acknowledged —"the voice of the people is the voice of God." Moreover, it is said, "Heaven hears and sees as the people hear and see;" on which passage a commentator remarks,

"This is necessarily the case since heaven is without figure."

To every one acquainted with Chinese sentiments on the First Cause, it is evident that the terms Shang-te, "Supreme Ruler," used in the Shoo-king, and Tëën, "Heaven," have the same meaning, so far as either is reducible to any definite conception. This opinion is corroborated by the following passage from the She-king, the most ancient collection of odes extant in the Chinese language; it is quoted in the works of Mencius, a part of the celebrated "Four Books:"—"The descendants of the Shang dynasty numbered more than one hundred thousand persons; Shang-te, 'the Supreme Ruler,' decreed their subjugation by Chow; for heaven's decree is not invariable: that is, is not always in favour of one family."

In this extract, "Supreme Ruler" and "Heaven" are used, as synonymous terms, to point out the all-controlling energy to which the actions of individuals, and the fate of nations, are subjected; which energy seems in many respects equivalent to the Jupiter Optimus Maximus of the ancients, both in the prerogatives it assumes and the attributes with which it is invested. If there be properties attributed to it at all descriptive of the character of the Supreme Being as he is revealed in the Scriptures, they are those of the god of providence; albeit in connection with this idea other sentiments are entertained which nullify the conception of an almighty, ever-living, unchangeable existence. According to the meaning of the words "Supreme Ruler," the prerogatives of this personage are restricted to the single act of ruling the world. But Shang-te is the same as *tëën*, "heaven;" and *tëën*, "heaven," is synonymous with *le*, "principle;"

while *le*, "principle," according to Chinese philosophers, is but another name for the abstract essence, *tae-keih*—the *anima mundi* of the Platonists—which originated, pervades, and animates the material universe. Now things that are equal to the same are equal to one another; wherefore, since *Shang-te* is synonymous with heaven, and heaven is explained by *le*, *Shang-te* must also be the same as *le;* whence this epithet, supposed to be descriptive of the true God, and to be derived by tradition from the patriarchs, is in reality no more than a personification of the invisible principle, *le* or *tae-keih*, according to the opinions of modern commentators on the subject. Again: heaven, earth, and man, are denominated *san-tsae*, three powers—of which this one principle innate in matter is the essence; and from the language of native authors, as well as the opinions of foreign Chinese scholars, I am strongly inclined to think that *Shang-te* and *tëën* are but different terms for the same mysterious Supreme, who sways the destinies of mortals, whose name is used to overawe the public mind for political purposes, and who is to be approached but seldom—as on great national occasions—lest the people should contract too great familiarity with such august titles, and cease to reverence them. Confucius admonishes his disciples to treat the gods with respect, and to keep at a distance from them.

It has been common for the emperors of China, in modern as well as ancient times, who are arrived at a peculiar epoch of their history, or have received marks of celestial favour in a lengthened and felicitous reign, to offer solemn sacrifices to the Supreme Ruler, the azure heavens, the earth, and the spirits of departed ancestors, all which deities share equal honours, though precedence

is given to Shang-te, under the pretext of evincing their gratitude, and avowing their dependence for the future, but rather to avail themselves of the popular influence acquired by such an appeal to the prejudices and superstitions of their subjects. The coronation of a young prince, and the celebration of a jubilee at the close of an aged emperor's reign, are occurrences befitting munificent sacrifices, and solemn exercises of public and national devotion. Both events happened in the life of Kèèn-lung, whose conduct furnishes an illustration of the manner in which these festivities are observed. At his own coronation, while burning incense and silently praying to the high heavens, he made a vow, that since his ancestor Kang-he — his immediate predecessor but one — had reigned sixty-one years, so he, if he should be permitted to reign sixty, would then transfer the crown to his heir. Accordingly, at the winter solstice, during the great sacrifice, the emperor says he prayed to the Supreme Ruler; and mentioning the name of his intended heir, desired that if he were not fit for the throne, judgments from heaven might fall upon him, and another selection be made. He announced his intention to his deceased ancestors also, who, he imagines, look down from heaven and observe what is doing on earth. The heaven he prayed to, and the heaven where his ancestors are supposed to dwell, though the same word is used, seem to have proceeded from different ideas in the emperor's mind, the one inferior to the other; but heaven, supreme ruler, and ancestors, are all treated as if possessed of equal powers; and, indeed, his holy mother, then an old woman, is placed as high as Shang-te; for he told her also of his intention, and then, probably to enable the

deity to decide, reported her answer to him. He was advised by his attendants not to raise his son to the throne during his own lifetime; but his prayers, his vows, his secret intercourse with high heaven, the supreme ruler, and the souls of his ancestors, determined him to carry his purpose into effect.

I have previously adverted to two meanings of the word tëën—that of "material heavens," and "supreme presiding power,"—both which are connected in this passage with a third—"the supposed residence of departed spirits." The difficulty of attaching precise notions to such terms in native authors arises from their being ambiguously used in a special sense, when the context would seem to indicate the ordinary signification. It appears, however, that the term *Shang-te*, in its application to the invisible power by which the affairs of the universe are controlled, is borrowed from its common use to denote supreme authority and government on earth; and that *tëën*, suggested by the overshadowing material heavens, is appropriated to the same invisible Supreme, probably because the works of creation inspire the thoughtful beholder with impressions of an existent, eternal godhead. This sentiment would be especially produced by the celestial portion of the divine workmanship, to the study of which the Chinese, as well as the Arabians, Chaldeans, and Egyptians, have been remarkably addicted from the earliest ages. For this reason also it is that astrology—the pretended science of the stars—coupled with the assumed decision of a numerical fate, has enthralled such masses of intellectual being through so many ages. Kung-ming, a celebrated personage in the civil wars of the three kingdoms,—the third century after Christ,—was much devoted

to the study of astrology, by the aid of which he foretold his own death during his last illness. He nevertheless, having lighted lamps within his tent, in a certain number and order corresponding to the appearances of the heavenly bodies, composed a prayer on the occasion, which he addressed to heaven and the stars for the purpose of reversing its decrees and protracting his life. It was as follows: "Born into the world in times of anarchy, I would gladly have remained till old age secluded amidst forests and fountains of water; but called forth by frequent visits from the emperor, I did not presume to decline my utmost exertions in his service; I am apprehensive that my life is now drawing to a close, and have therefore reverently written a short prayer to announce these things to the azure canopy of heaven; and, prostrate, hope that heaven will graciously bow down, look and listen, and bend circumstances, that the number of my days may be increased, and that I may recompense my sovereign, save his people, and render the house of Han perpetual. I dare not offer irreverent prayers, but am impelled by the most acute and sincere feelings." Having finished his prayer he remained prostrate on the earth till morning, and shortly after died. But notwithstanding the ill success of his petition, and that it is the popular belief of the Chinese that death is pre-ordained by a fixed numerical fate, they still arrange lamps corresponding to the stars of heaven, and have recourse to spells and charms in imitation of this celebrated individual. During the commotions in which he lived, there were, according to the records of those periods, nine eclipses of the sun, seven rendings of mountains, eleven earthquakes, four extensive inundations, two famines, in

which the people devoured each other, and twenty disturbances on the frontier. Celestial phenomena, denominated "signs from heaven," are considered as interpreters of the divine will, which enable the initiated to read the destinies of mortals with infallible certainty. The eclipse of the sun is supposed to indicate want of virtue in the monarch, and the necessity of close self-examination. An eclipse of the moon should suggest inquiry into the nature of public punishments inflicted on criminals, whether they are not lighter than justice demands; for, according to the sentiments of some Chinese emperors and courtiers, heaven will sooner be offended by an infliction below than above the standard of equity; although there is often much parade of the emperor's clemency, both in passing sentence on a criminal and carrying it into execution.* An eclipse of both these heavenly bodies occurred in the first month of the sixtieth year of Kèen-lung's reign, which, notwithstanding the emperor's conviction that "eclipses take place in regular order, and may be calculated thousands of years before," he is rather inclined to regard as an extraordinary event. Reasons derived from political considerations, and the appearance of the heavens, are found commingled in the conduct of the imperial government, which savours more of dexterity in accommodating itself to the predilections of the people than of faithfulness even to its own limited convictions of duty towards a higher power.

Heaven and earth are the most common deities invoked

* For example, when a criminal is about to suffer decapitation at Canton, he is made to kneel with his face towards the north, that is, the place of the emperor's residence, and (*kan seay hwang te teih gnan*) thank his imperial clemency for inflicting fatherly chastisement so mercifully on so undutiful a subject.

on ordinary occasions by the government and the people. These powers may be considered only as other names for Yin and Yang, the male and female in nature; the male applicable to heaven, and the female to earth. On formal state occasions the emperor officiates as the high priest by offering bullocks in sacrifice—a rite which it is said originated in high antiquity before the invention of fire, when the victim was presented undressed. It is now slain and prepared two days previously, when his majesty sacrifices in person. The emperor and his officers may be regarded as the priests of the court sacrifices which constitute the national religion of China, and are offered to heaven at the winter solstice, to earth at the summer solstice, and then to Shang-te praying for corn, to deceased ancestors, and to local deities, such as gods of the land and grain, spirits of mountains, rivers, winds, and fire; the queen of heaven—a deified young woman, who lived in the province of Füh-këën in the ninth century. She was the member of a seafaring family; at an early age she recited prayers addressed to the goddess of mercy, and made a vow of perpetual virginity. It is said she fell into a trance for the purpose of saving her two brothers; but being hastily awoke by her parents, she was prevented from rescuing her elder brother, who was drowned. Towards the close of the century she died, or rather according to the Chinese expression (shing-hwa), "ascended and was translated." She afterwards often appeared to deliver persons from danger; and was honoured in the twelfth or thirteenth century by the imperial family of Sung with the posthumous title—*hoo-kwŏ-pe min tëën how neang neang*—"her ladyship the queen of heaven, the guardian of the country, and preserver of the

people." The deity of the sea, the Neptune of China, from whom rain is supplicated, and to whose honour numerous temples are dedicated on the banks of the great canal; the god of literature to whom the learned present offerings; the *manes* of the dead, among whom Confucius, honoured by sacrifices twice a year, and a warrior of the Han dynasty, the Mars of China, worshipped by the military, are greatly distinguished; the latter more especially by the reigning family. The inventors of law, medicine, and almost every other art or profession that has been of service to the Chinese, are placed among their gods. Such are the divinities of a sect which professes to have found out the First Cause to perfection! But what inconsistency between sentiment and practice! For while one first cause is darkly apprehended, on the principle that every thing which exists is the result of an originating agency, these deluded reasoners ascribe divine honours to a multitude of topical deities, some of whom have been men or women like themselves; others are the most magnificent and striking objects in the material world, and others the great changes and revolutions in nature.

But it may be asked, what other means are in operation by which juster conceptions of the Creator of the universe might be diffused among the Chinese?

Jews, it has been said, inhabit the interior of China. If this be the case, they must have resided there several centuries; and consequently, during that time may be supposed to have communicated some correct information respecting the God of ancient Israel.

Some writers on ecclesiastical history have maintained that the Nestorians entered China about the close of the

seventh century, where their sect flourished—especially during the thirteenth—until its decline and fall in the fifteenth or sixteenth century. But as Dr. Milne justly remarks: "The Nestorians, according to Dr. Mosheim, and other ecclesiastical historians, must have been in China for a period of more than eight hundred years; and it is a singular circumstance, that if they really were there for so great a length of time, Chinese history never mentions them." Since the Chinese mention the Buddhists, the Mahometans, and the Roman Catholics, it is certainly reasonable to expect that the Nestorians, occupying so prominent a position in the country during several centuries, would also attract the attention of its historians and philosophers, more especially as Choo-foo-tsze and other eminent writers lived near the time of their greatest alleged prosperity. Native authorities, however, preserve the most entire silence on the subject; whence it is doubtful whether this sect ever existed in that region of the world.

Mahometanism was introduced into China about the ninth century; the disciples of which, since they are zealous opponents of idolatry, would inculcate the worship of one God. Its followers occupied the mathematical department at court for three hundred years, until the fall of the Ming dynasty—the last Chinese family that sat on the throne—and the usurpation of the Tartars. But little light has been thrown on the general question of the Divine existence by the operations of this sect, who, however, use the term Choo, "Lord," to denote the Supreme Being, whom they declare to be only one—not the first of a series, but separate and distinct—without likeness, manner, or mode, incomparable, unequalled in rank

or state of being. In the north of China there are still several cities inhabited by the disciples of Islamism, respecting whom it may be affirmed, that, so far as any beneficial influence has been exercised, they might as well have been left to their own misguided reasonings; the introduction of this system having only involved them in deeper perplexity and error.

The Roman Catholics first communicated correct sentiments on the existence of God to the Chinese empire, which they entered in the sixteenth century, with a zeal and determination that no obstacle could withstand, to plant the standard of the cross within its territories, and subdue its millions to the obedience of the Romish faith. The designation for the Supreme Being which they finally adopted, and which now characterizes their system in China, is "Heaven's Lord."

Since that period Protestant missionaries have translated the whole of the Scriptures into the language of the Chinese, who have now an opportunity of comparing their views of the First Cause with the doctrine of Divine Revelation on this all-important topic.

From the preceding remarks it would appear that the application of the terms Shang-te and Heaven to a superior power has been derived from their use to denote supreme authority on earth. It is well known that the Chinese government affects to be a transcript of the celestial orders; the combined influence of which its functionaries are said to represent, in the discharge of their respective duties. Action and re-action of sentiment is thus produced. On the one hand, superstitious prejudices are invoked to ensure the subordination of the people to their rulers; on the other, respect for the prevailing

superstition is upheld by an appeal to the framework of civil society, as affording tolerance to the principle of one presiding deity, aided by the authority of numerous inferior gods. Wherefore the infidelity of the sceptic in religion, according to Chinese notions, is silenced by reference to the existing order of civil government; and the political anarchist is made ashamed of his turbulence by an appeal to the authoritative example of the heavenly bodies, the harmony of whose operations bespeaks the wisdom of a system of political and moral control founded on so illustrious a model. Chinese authorities, it must be confessed, have always been very careful publicly to acknowledge their dependence on a Supreme Power for military successes as well as civil tranquillity: hence Kéén-lung, one of the most celebrated emperors of the present dynasty, having subjugated a Tartar tribe, raised a stone tablet at E-le, where he had fixed the seat of the local government, and inscribed on it the following couplet:—

天之所培者人雖傾之不可撼也
天之所覆者人雖栽之不可殖也

The tree which Heaven plants, though man throw it down, cannot be uprooted:
The tree which Heaven casts down, though man re-plant it, will never grow.

This term, heaven, however, is far too complex in its import to express, without confusion, the simple idea of God; for it denotes the material heavens, which, in conformity to the Ptolemaic system, are divided into ten different strata, of which the third stratum is the dwelling-place of the goddess of love; the ninth is the *primum mobile*, which carries the other eight along with it; the tenth is

the dwelling-place of the Great Ruler, and of all the gods and saints who are tranquil and unmoved. Choo-foo-tsze calls it "the hard shell heaven," which comprehends the inferior heavens, and controls the universe. True, heaven is sometimes represented as intelligent, impartial, just, and merciful, to which, however, divine attributes and personal perfections are not ascribed.

It seems that the Chinese early admitted the notion that provinces, districts, cities, towns, villages, streets, shops, families, and sepulchres, require the presidency of a distinct divinity; that hills and vales, streams and fountains, fire and water, the sea and the air, with the more subtile parts of aerial matter, cannot perform their functions in the economy of nature and providence without the inspiring influence of local genii; and that births and deaths, wealth, bodily enjoyment and long life, together with the means of acquiring all desirable blessings, need the superintendence and sanction of individual deities to secure human happiness.

Idolatry, though not generally prevalent till the introduction of Buddhism in the first century of our æra, was first introduced during the Shang dynasty, more than a thousand years prior to that period, by Woo-yih, who, having made idols, employed persons to push them along, and thereby gave offence to real celestial beings, for which he was struck dead by thunder. An image of a man was also made by Te-yih, to represent the gods of heaven. The origin of idolatry, therefore, preceded by several centuries the sect of Fŭh, which is now its principal patron.

Having endeavoured to point out the notions of the Chinese on the first of the three powers in nature con-

nected with their metaphysical speculations on the origin of all things, it will devolve on me now to show their physical theories on the formation of the earth, and the use they make of this system in their social habits:—to discuss the properties of the second power in the universe, and its practical influence.

The contrast between heaven and earth is very great; for earth is represented as a scene in which "truth and falsehood, right and wrong, are blended together without distinction; while in heaven every thing is most clearly discriminated." This sentiment is inscribed on the gate of a temple at Canton, the overseer of which pays to the government a sum equal to a thousand pounds sterling; and it is said recovers it again with a profit in the course of two or three years, by selling candles and other things to the worshippers. It is, nevertheless, one of the supreme powers to which homage is due; and libations are poured out in grateful acknowledgment of plenty.

When the original breath or vapour of the universe was first divided, the solid, polluted, and opaque parts became "mother earth," which assumed the power of controlling and arranging all creatures. Imperial Heaven and Queen Earth are regarded by the Emperor of China as his progenitors. Prayers are to be addressed to these powers to invoke their favour.

Chinese writers on the theory of the earth maintain that there are five original elements, whose names and order are, water, fire, wood, metal, earth, of which the last occupies the centre of a circle described by the other four: the first two take precedence of the rest, both on account of superior importance and priority of existence.

Moses, in describing the creation, mentions water as

the first element, brought into operation by the Divine Being: "And the earth was without form, and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." Water is also the first element in the mundane system of the Chinese. According to their philosophy, when heaven and earth were in a chaotic state, before a separation had taken place between them, there existed only two elements, which may represent the chaos and light of Moses; these are *water*, the sediment of which became earth; and *fire*, whose more subtile parts ascended and became wind, halo, thunder, lightning, suns, stars, and other objects of similar properties: a system slightly resembling the sacred writers, which divides the water into upper and lower, by an intervening firmament, when the waters below are congregated in one place and dry land appears; but the Chinese do not mention by what power the lighter were separated from the grosser elements, nor how the mass, which was originally soft, became hard. Their theory is illustrated by resemblance to the agitations of water which groups of hills present when viewed from a distant eminence, and by the effect of tides in drifting sands. The orbicular movement of the heavens preserves the position of the earth, which it is supposed, were this revolution to cease, would instantly sink into annihilation. The circular motion of heaven and earth in creation is likened to the upper stone in a mill, which revolves without intermission; and the production of creatures, to the motion of the middle stone, from which coarser and finer materials are thrown out. There is, moreover, a popular notion current in China of eight consecutive days in creation, on each of which, after the opening of heaven

and earth, *fowls, dogs, swine, sheep, cows, horses, man,* and *grain,* were successively produced. It is possible this theory owes much to taste; since the three first productions are delicacies prohibited to young persons by Confucius's rules of filial piety, lest there should be insufficient nourishment for the aged. But amid great darkness and confusion, some likeness is traceable to sacred story; inasmuch as animals were made before man, and successive days of creation are distinctly recognized in this system; which, however, extends the period two days beyond that of Moses, and contains no allusion to the inhabitants of the waters. Moreover, the productions of the earth, which God created first, stand last in this arrangement. Hence it appears man was created on the seventh day, which in the first month of the year is considered by the Chinese as man's day, on which and the day following they will not sweep their houses, "to avoid the allusion of sweeping man and his food to destruction."*

No sabbath is observed by the Chinese; nor is it intimated in their divisions of time. Dr. Morrison, noticing the fact, remarks:—"Those from whom the Chinese descended separated before its institution, and hence a sabbath is not observed among the Chinese. This idea is submitted as a probable solution of the difficulty which exists in accounting for the Chinese having no sabbath, if the observance of that day was commanded at the creation of our first parents. For the argument in favour of the opinion that the sabbath was first appointed in the wilderness, at Mount Sinai, see Paley's Moral Philosophy."† With due deference to such an authority as

* See Morrison's Dictionary, Vol. I. Part I. page 579.

† See Morrison's View of China, page 52.

Paley, I profess I cannot, on scriptural grounds, admit the soundness of his argument, and am therefore unprepared to accede to the hypothesis of Dr. Morrison. If the Chinese, as some not improbably suppose, were originally a colony from Egypt, their early separation from the rest of mankind would account for such confused stories as plainly relate to Scripture facts; and obviate difficulties, in admitting the institution of the sabbath to be coeval with creation, which arise from want of traditional testimony, or presumptive proof in present customs and manners among the same people. It cannot, indeed, be surprising, that idolaters, who soon began to multiply after the Flood, should lose, in natural divisions of time, created by alternations of day and night, and lunar and solar revolutions, a conventional period, whose preservation would only remind them of principles and practices human nature has always been prone to forget. If some nominal Christians, educated in observance of the sabbath from infancy, can readily cease to reverence its sacred ordinances, when transplanted to Pagan countries; need the obliteration of this hallowed institution from heathen minds, thousands of years after its first establishment, excite astonishment, or throw suspicion on its venerated antiquity? We must either suppose that God concealed all knowledge of the stupendous work of creation from the antediluvians and patriarchs, or allow that it is possible for their posterity to forget divine ordinances in quest of worldly gratifications. But to whom did Jehovah utter the sentiments recorded by Moses,* except to our first parents on the day after his works were ended? and why did the division of time into weeks obtain which was

* See Genesis ii. 1—3.

known to Noah,* as appears from his sending the dove out of the ark at successive periods of seven days, when no natural phenomena pointed it out, if it had not been derived from the words of sabbatical institution uttered at the beginning of the world? As well might we argue, that because the Chinese entertain erroneous notions of the creation, the earth was not framed till the Pentateuch was written, as infer the original institution of the sabbath in the wilderness from the fact of its absence from their code of sacred observances, or its omission from their systems of chronology. The fourth commandment, which assigns the rest of God after the creation, as a reason for enacting the law of the sabbath, and enforces its solemn obligation on the Israelites, by motives arising out of their recent deliverance from Egypt, will equally account for the want of a sabbath among the Chinese, whether as re-organizing an ancient institution or establishing one heretofore unknown; because if they, whose progenitors lived nearest to the source of true religion, and preserved its elements and forms for the longest period, now required the republication of a principal ordinance, is it matter of wonder, which bears a doubtful aspect on the doctrine of a sabbath from the beginning, that its observance should be unknown to the ceremonies of a people, from whose minds every correct impression of truth has long been obliterated? Suppose Moses had designed to institute the observance of a sabbath among the Egyptians, would not their estranged condition have justified a wide departure from the manner adopted towards Israel? In one case he must address a people among whom no trace of such ordinance remained, who would therefore need all the

* See Genesis viii. 15.

formalities of an original enactment; in the other, he would appeal to those who had known the law, but had not accurately kept it, and therefore required it to be reinstated in ancient authority, with such additional sanctions as altered circumstances demanded. China is in the former predicament; no wiser on account of Mosaic institutes, because, as it may be presumed, of her distance from the scene of divine revelations, and sharing in all the disabilities resulting from the gradual but early loss of truth in patriarchal times, which was handed down orally, without any theocratic system like that of Moses, to uphold its rites and ordinances in their pristine integrity.

With regard to the origin and duration of the universe, some Chinese philosophers think that it has been preceded by a similar system; an idea which, considering how many thousand years the present state is supposed to have existed, approximates that of the eternity of matter; that though not in itself indestructible, it is liable to be reduced again to chaos, from which a new organization will hereafter arise. But while nothing short of the highest point to which human wickedness can be carried, will involve the possibility of its destruction, and the annihilation of its occupants, animate and inanimate, still such a state of impiety and moral degradation is possible; so that creation, destruction, and reproduction, in alternate succession for ever, is the conclusion to which this theory leads; a sentiment in some respects not dissimilar to the meaning conveyed in the following proverb—"When at the utmost extremity, a change must be effected:" which signifies, that prosperity not only in the course of events will *probably* precede, but must inevitably

generate misfortune; and that calamities, on the other hand, are agents under the power of a similar necessity to produce happiness; whence moral delinquency has power not only to dissolve the present social system, but, moreover, to destroy the material fabric of the universe.

The five elements, so disposed that earth occupies the centre, exhibit a model to which men and things in varied positions are made conformable. The five antediluvian emperors, celebrated in ancient story, seem naturally referrible to this number and its properties; especially since one reigns by wood, another by fire, a third by earth, a fourth by metal, and a fifth by water. Then there are five human relations, and five constant virtues; five ranks of nobility; five points—east, west, south, north, and centre, evidently arranged according to the supposed order of the elements; as are likewise household gods, which occupy the four corners and middle of the house; the five tastes; five colours; five viscera, all which not only conform to the number, but are in some degree under the influence of those original materials.

Such is the general account Chinese philosophers give of our planet, with its correlative properties and influences; from which, no doubt, the title "mother earth" has originated.

The last division of this subject is *man*, whom we are to contemplate in the light which Chinese writers reflect on his origin and ultimate destiny, together with his present relations, domestic, social, and political. Topics, already discussed, have rendered partial tribute to this, in passing; but we design more especially to ascertain the sentiments of Chinese on the human species, and their counsel to man under moral and sacred responsibilities, whom we

have seen theoretically dividing sovereign and creative honours with heaven and earth, but practically overruling their decisions. What, then, are the notions entertained of this important personage? how is he treated? and whither, in his earthly migrations, is he constantly tending? Chinese authors allege that he is the product of the earth, which is under the power of a physical necessity to sustain him:—"Earth produced man, and earth must support him." He is the soul of the universe: an expression which denotes the spiritual or intellectual part of creation, the very energy of heaven and earth's creating power; resulting from the intercourse of the male and female principle; congregating in himself the united influence of demons and gods; together with the subtile matter of the five elements.

From the time Yin and Yang united, and the five elements were intermingled in the centre of the universe, moisture and heat operated on each other and produced an intelligent being, who, as he gazed upon the heavens, saw a golden blaze of light dart from a star and fall to the earth. He approached the phenomenon, and perceived an animated creature of the same species as himself. It cried out, "The wings have long embraced you; on the breaking forth of the fructifying principle, I knew that you had entered into the world; and then, plucking plants, made garments to cover the inferior parts of the body." Having bestowed the appellation "Imperial reverence," it informed him of the manner of creation; of the division of the heavens and the earth; of the Yin and Yang; of the separation of darkness from light; and that all things were produced from an egg first formed in the water; that there were four other human beings made,

at the four points of the compass, each of whom, when the golden-coloured personage disappeared, flew to the spot from a different quarter: the first from the north, "son of the essence of water;" the second from the south, "son of the essence of red earth;" the third from the east, "superintendent of wood;" the fourth, "golden mother," from a paradisiacal mountain in the west. These five persons obtained out of an immense crucible, by chemical process, a male and a female, from whom, through the essential influence of the sun and moon, human beings descended, who gradually filled the earth. His "Imperial reverence" directed the dispersion of the first families, and supplied them with rafts to cross the seas and rivers, to whatever place the wind might drive them. These sentiments are entertained by the sect of Taou, which is called the philosophical sect of China.

From these legends, sufficiently indicative of tradition derived from Scripture, and prevailing among almost all nations, we pass on to sentiments respecting the body and the soul of man. The body is a world in miniature, all whose members act in due subordination to their immediate superiors. It has five officers, arranged according to the five constituent elements of nature, which enter into the physical and moral systems, and control the superstitious theories of the Chinese. The functions of these officials are as follow, and agree, except one, to those of the organs of sense: the eye, which presides over objects of vision, and is called the inspecting and investigating officer; the ear, pre-eminent in sounds, is designated the distinguisher; the nose, to which the faculty of smelling has been assigned, is appointed judge and discriminator; the mouth is the issuing and receiving officer; and the

eyebrows are the preservers of long life: it is supposed, that a strong, bushy eyebrow indicates longevity, and hence the importance attached to it; but what claim it has to be considered as one of the organs of sense, it is rather difficult to decide.

Opinions expressed by ethical writers differ from those entertained by the religious sect, with regard to the value of the body, and its proper mode of treatment. The Buddhists speak of it most contemptuously: "It is at best," they say, "but a loathsome bag:"—a sentiment probably generated by the successive transmigrations to which, it is thought, one soul may be subjected. Since the body is a mere vehicle of preparation to the spirit for its higher destinies, without any share in the enjoyments secured by a triumphant course of virtue, it is necessarily degraded far below the dignity ascribed to the immaterial and immortal part. It is, however, honoured more highly than animals; which, according to the notions of this sect, are also receptacles of souls sent back from Hades in fulfilment of judicial decrees awarded to them in different halls of judgment, through which they pass to undergo the ordeal instituted for human beings in these invisible regions. But though it stands first in the class, it is associated with beasts, birds, fishes, and insects, as a material habitation for the soul unworthy to be admitted into paradise, in whose honours, even when finally ransomed by a meritorious career on earth, the body, doomed with brutes to annihilation, can never share. On this system it would be difficult to ascertain how many bodies are required for one soul, or in what part of the animal creation these migratory spirits which have re-entered the world are now sojourning: re-union between the same soul

and body in a future state seems never to be contemplated: indeed, it involves a physical impossibility.

The Confucian system, by reason of its deep veneration for filial piety, is most solicitous to honour the body. To treat it with ignominy, wounds the reputation and feelings of parents, who are the instruments of its existence; but to lavish praises upon and almost adore it, is quite consistent with theories which hesitate to admit, if they do not positively deny, the immortality of the soul. A disciple of Confucius, drawing near to death, uncovered his body, to show by its perfect condition the extent of his filial piety, but indicated no apprehension of the continued existence of his soul in another state. The theories of this sect well accord with human nature. Nourishment of the body, necessary to its wants and grateful to its feelings, is not only a natural but sacred obligation, performed under the pleasing impression that honour is thereby reflected on parents and ancestors, the merit of which will be rewarded with the homage of admiring posterity in life, and by sacred offerings after death.

Injunctions to preserve the body are not, therefore, avowedly based on selfish fear of pain occasioned by neglect, but on sacred duties arising out of the filial and paternal relations. Voluptuousness is not professedly encouraged; but all ceremonies, whether religious or civil, social or domestic, whether applied to living beings, dumb idols, or the spirits of dead men, begin and end with feasting.

Inquisitive nations, accustomed to reflect on man's constitution and destiny, naturally speculate on his mode of existence after death, and the enjoyment or sufferings of a future state. Chinese theories with regard to spirits

are gloomy and uncertain. They have been generated from notions of the two original principles in nature,* as it appears from the terms Ling and Hwăn, which they employ to designate the soul; of which Ling is defined to be the subtile, ethereal part of the feminine power, and Hwăn the spiritual part of the male energy, which resides in the liver during the continuance of physical life, and constitutes the *shade* or *manes* when separated from the body by death. Another designation, answering to the word *spirit*, is Pih, which denotes the spiritual part of the feminine energy in nature. It is the sentient principle, or animal soul, that resides in the lungs during life, but is dissipated at death. Superior esteem for male above female energy prevails in this theory; since the ethereal part of the masculine power is divine, and of the feminine power only spiritual. But from the phrases "dissipated," "dissolved," "scattered," applied to the soul by philosophical writers, its existence would seem to depend upon the physical conformation of the body, whose animating substance it constitutes, till resolved into its original elements at death. Some authors speak of its residing in the body as sharpness in a knife—a theory which makes its preservation depend on the state of the body. Of the phrase San Hwăn, "three souls," which probably refers to the Ling, the Hwăn, and the Pih, I received the following illustration from a Chinese:—At death, one of these spirits remains in the house as its protector, to which incense is daily offered by the surviving members of the family; another becomes guardian divinity of the sepulchre, to whose honour a small stone tablet is erected with an inscription on it, meaning, "happy spirit,"

* See page 137.

"guardian of the tomb," "spirit behind," or some similar phrase; the third passes into the invisible state, to receive honours and offerings rendered by its worshippers on a platform of stone prepared for their accommodation at the head of the grave.* I have no written authority for such interpretation, but the circumstances adduced in support of it most certainly take place, and therefore invest it with an air of probability. It appears from Chinese authors that, until the introduction of Buddhism, but little was said on the migratory state of the soul after death. Some opinions, it is probable, were previously entertained respecting man's existence beyond the grave; because worship was anciently rendered to heaven and earth as the Supreme Deity. It may, however, be affirmed, that when correct traditions of divine revelation were extinguished, by the growing prevalence of human depravity, all higher motives of religious homage simultaneously perished; for if the original depositaries of truth conveyed along with the doctrine of divine existence, that of righteous retribution also, as doubtless they did, it can hardly be denied that just notions on both points would stand or fall together. Since no well-defined concern for

* According to the Roman poets, every man possessed a three-fold soul, which after the dissolution of the body resolved itself into the *manes*, the *anima* or *spiritus*, and the *umbra;* to each of which a different place was assigned. The manes descended into the infernal regions, to inhabit either Tartarus or Elysium. The *anima* ascended to the skies, to mingle with the gods; while the *umbra* hovered around the tomb, as if unwilling to quit its connection with the body, of which it was the *wraith* or shadow. This notion is expressed in the following lines, attributed to Ovid:—

"Terra tegit *carnem*, tumulum circumvolat *umbra*,
Orcus habet *manes*, *spiritus* astra petit."

Hence Virgil represents Dido, when about to expire, as threatening to haunt Æneas with her *umbra*, at the same time consoling herself with the expectation that the tidings of his punishment will reach her *manes* in the shades below.—Encyc. Britann., art. Apparitions.

the welfare of the human spirit, no proper estimate of its importance, nor even any impressive sentiments of its existence, are put forth by the founder of moral philosophy, or the restorer of reason, we must look for religious opinions in China principally among the Buddhists, whose tenets are embraced by many in connection with the morals of Confucius, not a few of whose followers ridicule them in health, but are glad of their succour in affliction, when the approach of death excites the apprehensions of that mysterious monitor within, which, where the feeblest light is thrown on futurity, cannot be satisfied without some preparation for the solemn act of entering its unknown regions.

The late Dr. Milne has given the following summary of opinions entertained by this sect on future retribution. "The sufferings of the Tartarus which their terrified imaginations have figured are represented in pictures, as the punishments in Purgatory and Tartarus were exhibited in the Eleusinian and other heathen mysteries; with this difference, however, that these are exposed to public view, those were seen by the initiated only. Lakes of blood, into which women who die in child-bed are plunged; red-hot iron pillars, which the wicked are made to embrace; devouring lions, tigers, snakes, and other animals; mountains stuck all over with knives, on the points of which the condemned are cast down and seen weltering in gore; cutting out the tongue; strangling; sawing asunder between flaming iron posts; the condemned creeping into the skins of those animals in the form of which they are destined to appear again on earth; boiling of the wicked in caldrons; the wheel or apparatus by means of which all the operations of the metempsychosis are performed;

horned demons, with swords, spears, hatchets, and hooks; wretched mortals, alternately shivering with indescribable cold, and burnt to coals with devouring fire: these, with numberless other such things, are represented with gross and disgusting minuteness."

These terrible representations of a future state, which awaken feelings of horror in vulgar minds, assume the form of impartial justice, proceeding by the ordinary process of law, where the judge, seated on his bench, hears accusations and administers punishments, according to the demerit of crimes proved by witnesses to have been committed, who are represented as present. In the absence of revelation, scenes of future misery seem much less difficult to imagine than those of happiness. The Paradise of Oriental heathens, suggested by a vain imagination, necessarily consists of sensual and puerile enjoyments, rendered desirable to appetites converted by long indulgence into habits, and fostered by a luxuriant climate destitute of the power to gratify propensities it never fails to create. No one conversant with human nature, with its solicitude to grasp objects not yet attained, and with its desire, from disappointment or satiety, to acquire unpossessed pleasure, will suppose that the most ingenious fancy can devise schemes of bliss competent to supply solid satisfaction. What, then, must be the gloominess and discomfort even of those who deny that they are obnoxious to purgatorial pains, or liable to atone in an animal body for sins committed as rational beings; since by the very constitution of natural taste no hope can be indulged of unsatiating felicity? But how few deluded heathens are placed by the decisions of conscience, beclouded and misguided though it be, on such an eminence

in moral attainments, and the practice of self-denying, superstitious rites, as to secure even this small measure of delusive comfort! And what is the alternative but an abandonment to those monstrous terrors, which fiend-like imaginations alone could invent, or minds immersed in brutal ignorance believe? I have seen Chinese females look at pictures of purgatorial torment, described above, with a horror apparently engendered by the impression that they were contemplating a portraiture of their own future doom.

The worship of departed spirits is another species of superstition, which exerts a mighty and irresistible influence over the Chinese. It seems to consist of Confucianism and Buddhism commingled, for disciples of both sects, whether their tenets are distinct or blended in one system, agree in this solemn observance. It operates as an all-powerful spell, by which living, sentient beings are indissolubly bound to invisible shades, once dwellers upon earth. And since the soul of man, it is taken for granted, dwells apart from his body, its immortality, as a natural consequence of separate existence, may be considered as the basis of a practice, which invests his imperishable part with power to exist unencumbered with a mortal form. Perhaps a description of this ceremony will be more intelligible if preceded by a brief statement of Chinese usages at death and interment.

When the parent of a family dies, a messenger is despatched to announce the event to relatives and friends; and a tablet is suspended at the door of wealthy persons, inscribed with the name and age of the deceased. White being used in mourning by the Chinese, pieces of white paper are pasted on each side of the door, to indicate the

occurrence among individuals of ordinary rank. Children and grand-children of the deceased, clothed in white, with a white bandage round their heads, sit on the ground weeping around the corpse, which is covered by friends with white cloth or silk the size of a coverlet. The eldest son puts two small copper coins into an earthen bowl, which he takes in his hands, and carries, supported by his friends, to the moat that surrounds the city, or to the well at the gate of the village, where he deposits his money and takes some water.* He returns home with the water thus purchased, and the ceremony is performed of washing the face and body of the corpse, which is then put into a coffin in state; and a tablet is erected bearing the name of the deceased; an eulogy on his character as a probationary being, and the designation of the dynasty under which he has lived. These tablets vary in form and inscription in different parts of China. The first inscription on paper is burnt and substituted by wood, before which, morning and evening for seven successive days, incense matches are lighted, and the children of the family prostrate themselves. At the end of three weeks the funeral takes place, attended by friends and relatives, who weep aloud. The tablet is carried in a sedan chair, and placed at the head of the grave, where oblations are rendered and prostrations again performed. After interment, the tablet is brought back, and sacrifices of pigs roasted whole, three or four different kinds of animal food,

* The ceremony 買水 mae shwuy, of buying water can only be performed by the eldest son living, or the eldest son's son, in preference to the second son. Whoever brings the water is entitled to a double share of the property. When neither children nor grand-children are alive, those next of kin buy the water, and inherit the property; so that, in fact, this ceremony determines the heir.

fruits, and pastry are offered, with accompanying prostrations; also morning and evening oblations, during the space of seven weeks, with the accustomed ceremonial of bowing the head in the dust. Instead of seven days, a period of seven weeks is observed by some rich families, who also defer interment many years. Rooms of paper, supplied with furniture and domestics, are burnt and passed into the invisible state for the use of the deceased. In more barbarous ages, slaves, attendants, and domestic animals, were slaughtered; and the wardrobe, furniture, and other things belonging to the deceased, were consumed by fire to supply the wants of the disembodied spirit. This cruel custom originated in the following manner:—In remote antiquity when rich persons died, imperfect representations of human beings, made of straw and supplied with springs, were entombed with them as their future attendants; but subsequently, about the age of Confucius, images for this purpose were made of wood, and bore a more striking resemblance to living persons than those ancient forms which they superseded; hence the sage, foreseeing that such a practice would eventually issue in the sacrifice of human life, severely reprehended the inventor as an enemy to his species, and declared him to be justly deprived of posterity for his offence—one of the heaviest calamities with which, in Chinese estimation, he could be visited. The horrid usage, introduced not long after, verified the prediction of the sage, whose benevolent apprehensions respecting the waste of human life were realized to a fearful extent. For when Woo-king of the state Tsin died, sixty-six persons were put to death, and interred with him. One hundred and seventy-seven ordinary individuals, together with three persons of superior

rank, were devoted by death to the service of *Muh-kung* in another world:—a monody still exists lamenting the fate of these three noblemen. Tsin-che-hwang-te, the first universal monarch of China, who flourished about two hundred years before the Christian æra, built the great wall of China, burnt all her books, buried alive, or left to perish in a pit, four hundred and sixty of her literati, commanded that his household females and domestics should be put to death and interred with him. The custom survived this period for some time; and when persons offered themselves voluntarily to die, from attachment to their masters or friends, such sacrifices were esteemed most noble and disinterested, but moral writers of a later age alike condemn the exactors and the victims of such barbarity. Modern times are satisfied with consecrating by fire silver paper, and representations of earthly enjoyments, accompanied by sacrifices, offerings, and libations.

Paper money, not for commercial purposes but to scatter at funerals, was brought into use during the existence of the states Wei and Tsin, in the third century after Christ. The writer has frequently seen this ceremony performed at Malacca, where Chinese, during their voluntary exile, scrupulously observe the rites of their native country, and tenaciously retain its traditions and customs. Amid the varieties of Pagan worship, no professedly religious act is ever performed with more scrupulous exactness or apparent solemnity by the Chinese than that of worshipping at the tombs of their progenitors. Aware, however, of the aversion of Christians to such a practice as idolatrous, they endeavour to obviate objections, by pleading for it as a mode of external respect

similar to interment among Europeans, and to their care of the tombs of deceased relatives. But every discerning observer will soon be convinced of the futility of their comparisons, and the falseness of the conclusions to which their reasonings lead. For if there be apparent sincerity in any act of idolatrous worship, which commends itself in grave, considerate deportment, it is manifested by these devotees when sacrificing to the manes of their ancestors. This mode of worship is attended with stronger demonstrations of feeling than any other, probably because there is deeper apprehension that neglect will occasion temporal afflictions, and engender worldly disappointments and losses. Self-interest prefers a strong claim to the parentage of this apparently benevolent devotion. Superstitious fear of being punished, guilty omission of what conscience enforces as a sacred duty, impression created by public opinion, and sanctity acquired by a custom prevailing from remote antiquity, which is, moreover, in perfect accordance with natural feelings, co-operate to stamp this exercise with characteristics so peculiarly sacred and meritorious, that it insinuates itself into the more important relations of life, and becomes so closely entwined around the fibres of the human heart as to be almost necessary to social existence and enjoyment. So strongly does veneration for this tribute after death prevail, that parents, in order to secure the memorial of the sepulchre for a daughter who has died during her betrothment, give her in marriage after her decease to her intended husband, who receives with nuptial ceremonies at his own house a paper effigy made by her parents, and, after he has burnt it, erects a tablet to her memory; an honour which usage forbids to be rendered to the memory

of unmarried persons. The law seeks without effect to abolish this absurd custom.

Judging only by what is seen at such seasons, a stranger would augur favourably of the national disposition, as humane and even charitable. Its professed object is to serve progenitors, and supply their wants; nor is the service confined to those by whom relative obligations have been conferred on earth, for there is a public institution, supported by voluntary subscriptions, which professes to supply the necessities of orphan spirits, who have no consanguineous survivors to care for them. There is a story, on which this practice is founded, of a young man named *Mŭh-leen*, to whom the epithet 'Honorable' is now attached. His mother was a very wicked woman, and after death consigned to punishment in Tartarus, whither her pious and devoted son repaired on the fifteenth of the seventh moon to rescue her from torment. When the gates of "earth's prison"—the Chinese term for hell—were opened, many of the imprisoned spirits escaped from the regions of darkness; and hence the custom of preparing garments of paper, and burning them for the use of the dead, spreading carpets on the floor, reciting numerous prayers, and covering tables with rich viands of varied descriptions, to remove from the abodes of darkness disconsolate spirits who have left no relatives on earth, for the purpose of elevating them to regions of light and purity. Similar ceremonies of scattering prayers and burning clothes are performed on the water on behalf of those spirits whose bodies have been drowned: numerous lanterns are lighted up at nights, and the ceremony is continued every day from the first of the seventh month to the fifteenth. At

the same season a yearly sacrifice of pigs, goats, and fowls, with extensive offerings of fruit, is provided by the Chinese of Malacca for the use of this description of spirits, to whom silver paper is dedicated by fire; a medium supposed to be necessary to constitute it an available offering. Why fire should be esteemed sacred does not appear. It is sufficiently virtuous to convert things from common to sacred uses, and even by the process of destruction to redeem them from desecration. Although it would be regarded as contemptuous to employ paper inscribed with Chinese symbols for ordinary purposes, or suffer detached pieces no longer serviceable to be trampled upon, yet burning it is not only free from objection, but enjoined as a duty incumbent upon all good Chinamen. A small furnace is erected within the area of the temple at Malacca, to which superfluous portions of written paper are brought to be consumed. Since the characters of the language, according to received theories, originated in heaven, fire is considered the proper medium of restoring them to their pristine dignity, after their allotted service on earth. But the uninitiated will not easily trace the connection between rude outlines of symbols derived from heaven, and their destruction, in a more perfect state by fire, unless this element be the ordained medium of intercourse between heaven and earth. It evidently does not result from the fitness of things. Human reason, left to its own discretion, might with equal propriety have chosen any other element as the ground of its plea with the Supreme Power. Indeed, on any other principle but that of an ulterior tradition from divine revelation, it appears impossible to account for the prominence given to fire as a consecrating element in sacred things. Such conjecture

derives some plausibility, I think, from the fact that the symbol for lamb in Chinese is composed of *sheep* and *fire*, that is, a sheep on the fire, as though the peculiar appropriation and destiny of lambs were for sacrificial offerings through fire: an idea not incongruous with the statement of Confucius, that a lamb constituted an ancient sacrifice of very great importance. Other victims, previously deprived of life, are offered in sacrifice; and fire is extensively and frequently employed as a sacred medium between the ultimate cause and human beings. Water, already alluded to as the first element, is sometimes made the receptacle of an extraordinary offering. The writer remembers seeing at Malacca a tortoise offered to the sea by a Chinese whose filial respect, or superstitious feeling, prompted him to render an extra tribute to his deceased progenitors. After a paper house was consumed, and costly delicacies peculiar to the climate and season were offered, with prostrations on the earth by the male members of the family clothed in sackcloth, the tortoise was committed alive to the sea, near which a guard remained sufficiently long to see that no avaricious hand deprived the hungry spirits of their expected feast. A ceremony of this kind is performed in favour of 屈原 a minister of state greatly beloved by the people, who, having been falsely accused, drowned himself, about two thousand years ago: it consists of a quantity of rice bound up in a certain leaf, and tied with silk cords of various colours, which is then boiled and thrown into the water. The same observance continues to this day, and is annually performed on the fifth of the fifth moon, accompanied by the amusement of dragon-boats, and beating of drums, intended to strike awe into the evil spirits that may lurk about the river.

The period of mourning for parents prescribed by Confucius, is three years; the ground of which is the peculiarly helpless state of infancy and its entire dependence on parental care during that time. The sage's system is retributive. It designs that obligations incurred by children towards their parents should be discharged in their own maturity, when their parents are descending into second childhood; and hence the prohibition of silken garments and animal food to those who are under seventy years of age. The care of parents on earth was worthy the legislative ability and benevolence of the sage; but he transgressed the limits of duty, and endangered his reputation for practical wisdom, when he ordained rites of worship to their manes. On the principle of reciprocation, the relations of parent and child become reversed. The father, who is the source of authority in this life, is dependent in the disembodied state on his children who survive him—a system which renders this world the source of supplies essential to immortal existence. The devotees at the tomb are commanded to sacrifice to their ancestors as present, to cherish the remembrance of their virtues, and closely imitate their example. Mourning is not to be worn for children who die under seven years of age. Writers on filial ethics enjoin the interment of deceased friends in a substantial coffin by the side of a hill, to insure the preservation of their remains for the longest possible period. Sometimes the ceremony of opening the grave, collecting the bones, washing aad placing them in an urn, and re-interring the sacred deposit, is performed by those who affect unusual filial devotion. Tombstones were introduced about the first century of the Christian æra, and inscriptions, which recorded the virtues of the dead, were entombed with

them. In ancient times it was not the usage to offer sacrifices at the tombs. It is not known precisely when the practice commenced, but it was probably about the age of Confucius. About the seventh century of our æra, persons were employed to weep at funerals, and finally hired for that purpose; the custom of observing every seventh day for a period of seven weeks, as a day of mourning and supplication after the death of elder relatives, began about this period. The remarkable fact of worshipping the shades of the dead as gods, and supporting them as creatures by their sacrificial offerings, does not appear to have struck the Chinese themselves as an inconsistency. A large sacrifice is offered yearly on the 6th of April, at the tombs of their ancestors. The term is called Tsing-ming, "pure and illustrious;" probably because by its observance the habitations of the dead are kept in repair, and the worship of departed friends is maintained, both which acts are deemed splendid illustrations of filial devotion. Papers are strewed about the grave with careful negligence, to remind passers by that its proprietor has rendered necessary homage to its unconscious inhabitant. Tents are erected in different parts of the cemetery, and supplied with essentials of life, or luxuries, according to resources and circumstances, to gratify guests who may honour the family vault with a devotional visit. The whole day is spent among the tombs, which are generally on the slope of a hill, and considerably occupied by these votaries of superstition, in interchange of friendly visits at each other's place of sepulture, where, notwithstanding rigid punctuality and seriousness in performing the rites of worship, festive gaiety prevails with as much spirit and enjoyment, after

the prostrations are over, as in any ordinary convivial meeting. Nourishment, consisting of rice, pork, fowl, wine, and fruit of all kinds, is first offered to the spirit, with the usual act of homage; and having been thus consecrated to spiritual and invisible objects, is consumed by the worshippers, under the impression of comforting departed shades with sustenance, thereby sanctified to their own support, without diminishing its value for physical purposes. Social intercourse and religious fellowship (so called) are blended in one act; for all who partake of the hospitality of such a season are expected to join in its devotions. An exception is made in favour of the missionaries, who, while the writer resided at Malacca, visited the tombs to distribute tracts, and converse with the worshippers. No objection was felt on the part of the Chinese to our participating their refreshment, nor did we ask questions for conscience' sake respecting its supposed idolatrous devotement. It is painful to a Christian mind, deeply impressed with its responsibilities, to mingle in such scenes; since their eternal consequences to the immediate actors cannot be of doubtful import. Nor is the occasion without danger of a two-fold kind—operating first on the missionary, by creating lukewarmness, and moral insensibility, and then by re-action on the heathen, who perceive less of that jealousy for the Lord of Hosts, than it is his duty to exhibit as well as feel when in contact with such abominations; since, from their constant recurrence, and the conviction of personal inability to counteract their influence, it is difficult to maintain a proper sense of their enormous guilt and extreme folly. Human nature, pliant to evil in every form, however uncongenial may be some of its modifications with esta-

blished habits, would rather glide along with the stream of current opinions, than set itself, with determined energy, to resist and correct them. Christian principle suffers great trial of strength in opposing this depraved tendency, where no cruel or revolting acts outrage the feelings of humanity. Experience is the best monitor as to the time for assailing such superstitions. The opportunity of addressing so many heathen, released from their secular engagements, on the beauty and excellency of Divine truth, as contrasted with the vain and sinful ceremonies they are convened to celebrate, seems too desirable to be omitted without self-dissatisfaction. It may, however, be questioned, whether the mind, under the fascinating influence of such superstitious scenes, and excited by their present agency, be in so favourable a state to receive impressions as when possessed of its ordinary thoughtfulness and tranquillity.

Chinese, from their native urbanity, are certainly more tolerant of opposition, and less addicted to excessive idolatry, in the literal sense of the term, than many others who give heed to the doctrines of devils and seducing spirits; but, perhaps, more real good will arise from calm expostulations in the absence of demon-worship, than when in actual contact with its debasing scenes and practices. This species of will-worship has been a stronghold of idolatry for numerous ages, and constitutes a most formidable barrier to the admission of a rational and purer system of devotion. It involves the mind in the darkest labyrinths of error, and fortifies its prejudices so strongly, that scarcely any human consideration will induce a Chinese to resign his ancestral tablet—its symbol of authority. It is the very last relic of Paganism, which a

subject of Divine grace will surrender, and where policy, apparent conviction, or temporal advantage, has induced a Pagan to assume a new profession, this one symbol of devotion, as an irresistible charm, has recalled him from his wanderings in the pathway of truth to his ancient superstition, and bound him, as with a fatal spell, under its omnipotent influences. So strongly did it interfere with the prosperity of Romanism by restoring to its own bosom those who had lapsed into that faith, that violence to the ancestral tablet, as proof of sincerity, was subsequently made the test of fitness to her communion. It truly constitutes a mighty mass of superstitious power, fearful not only in magnitude, but in the number of its constituent parts, the closeness of their mutual connection, and the extent of their ramifications in society. It is fixed in the strongest holds of the human spirit, whose feelings, judgment, consciousness, habitudes, all conspire to support it. It pervades every gradation of society, every diversity of age, each sex, all modifications of outward condition. Its prosperity is hailed as a common interest, by husband and wife, father and son, brother and sister, master and servant, friend and neighbour, ruler and subject. Its presence is marked by incense matches, burned morning and evening in the family, whose abode becomes identified with the tomb by the most mournful and sacred associations. The renewal at intervals of sepulchral rites prolongs intercourse between departed and present members of families, brings as well former generations into ideal contact with passing scenes and acts, as living beings with those now sleeping in the dust. The ancient Egyptians affected to retain the inhabitants of the world when dead, amid the daily haunts of men, not

so much to familiarise themselves with the termination of life, as to rob death of his triumph, and deprive the grave of its spoils. The long period to which interment is sometimes deferred by rich families in China, seems to involve a resemblance in sentiment to that which dictated the preservation of bodies by embalming in Egypt.

The constant anticipation of death would seem to be present with the Chinese in the practice adopted at Malacca, of always having a coffin placed outside the door to receive the adult inhabitant who may first require it. There is, however, but little if any additional seriousness on the great moral question. I have seen an aged individual seated on a coffin which he would perhaps soon occupy, reading not one of their ethical or religious works, but a popular novel, highly esteemed, indeed, for the ability with which it is written, though its immediate influence on the heart must be to increase its disinclination for the solemn ordeal of the judgment-seat. The appearance to a Christian stranger of so many peculiarly formed receptacles for the dead, consentaneously placed at the doors of human dwellings, is calculated to awaken his sympathies, and create a tender interest on behalf of their owners. The motive for this singular act is ascribed to the requirements of filial piety, which cannot be satisfied without coffins of prescribed thickness, sufficiently seasoned to resist premature decay. So strict are its injunctions, and so punctually are the duties fulfilled, that aged persons anticipate the rites to be performed at their sepulchres with the joy of hope, which accounts for the keener anguish felt by a parent on the death of his first-born son, than for any other child, since he is thereby deprived both of a representative on earth, and of a con-

tributor to his enjoyment in Paradise. Still so fondly do surviving members of families extend the sympathies cherished for life beyond the grave, that if they had their choice, even death would be preferred to perpetual separation. An occurrence came under my own observation illustrative of this remark. A Chinese, convicted of a cruel murder, had been sentenced to transportation for life. His friends, who sought to procure a mitigation of his punishment, solicited my supposed influence as an Englishman with the Governor on their behalf. I urged the aggravated nature of the offence as a reason why I could not even conscientiously ask such a thing, if I were sure of success; and suggested that it ought to be matter of thankfulness he was not hanged. He immediately replied, that he considered this a much severer punishment than death; for in that case his parents, who were living, might have performed his funeral rites, and the usual offices at the tomb, of which he was now deprived, while they would also be totally cut off from all intercourse with their son after death as well as in life. In a merely legislative aspect, we learn from this fact that banishment for life is regarded as a much severer act of retribution than death itself by the Chinese, as it probably is by all nations who have no fixed apprehension of future punishment. My object in introducing it was to exemplify the power of demon-worship over the heart and conscience of a Chinaman.

SECTION IV.

THE MORAL PHILOSOPHY OF THE CHINESE—THEIR SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT, COMPRISING THE MEANS BY WHICH ITS AUTHORITY IS UPHELD, AND CARRIED INTO EXECUTION.

FILIAL piety is the first of moral obligations inculcated on children; who are taught to reverence their parents, and render them unlimited obedience, to anticipate their wishes, alleviate their burdens in mature age, and afford them necessary support and comfort in their declining years. Confucius says, "Observe the disposition of a son while his parent is living, and have respect to his conduct when he is dead." A son is established in filial piety, who swerves not from principles recommended by his father during three years after his death. With seeming preference for sincere feeling to outward form, propriety, or ceremony, really occupies a prominent position in every act. It is the standard by which an obedient son regulates his deportment towards his parents in life; it dictates appropriate honours at their death and interment, and suggests the choice of sacrifices to be rendered to their manes. But filial duty is violated when a son's propensity to slothfulness, gambling, or drunkenness, deprives his aged parents of support; when wealth is bestowed with selfish preference on his own family to their neglect; when, to their dishonour, he obeys the seductive lusts of the eye and ear; or when their life is endangered by his

love of contention and warfare. Confucius, from whom principles of filial piety, and rules for its observance, emanated, though the doctrine did not originate with him, was of a mild, placable disposition, and discouraged in his disciples a turbulent and vindictive spirit. His instructions were communicated in the twofold capacity of legislator and moral philosopher. He urged attention to the elements of things on the maxim, that a man of superior virtue must study first principles with unwearied application; for when these are rooted in the mind, exterior excellence, both ornamental and practical, admits of easy and successful culture. But what is the basis of this boasted perfection of Chinese sages? Virtue and knowledge seem to be inseparably connected, as root and branch, fountain and stream; the presence of one pledges the existence of the other. Perfect wisdom and immaculate purity belong connaturally to philosophers of the highest class. The next grade, though not born with the same splendid moral and physical properties, is yet able to acquire them by study; and a step further in the descending series, considerable eminence, literary and moral, may be attained by indefatigable diligence and intense labour; but the lowest class of persons, including the mass of mankind, are not only born without superior pretensions, but never arrive at perfection, even with long and severe application. Talent of the highest order is, consequently, a kind of aristocracy in China; and, although not hereditary, it is enjoyed by some as the gift of heaven, over which they have no more control than a person born to an estate has had in determining his fortune. This distinction in favour of sages does not, however, include moral excellence; for all are considered

as born with docile, virtuous dispositions, and capable by their own efforts of attaining the standard of perfect virtue; sacred and moral influence is diffused by their presence, which operates with beneficent energy on all whom it surrounds. Their example is dignified by the most exalted epithets, as divine, holy, renovating in its character, a living expression of undecaying moral beauty. Prosperity, individual, social, and national, rests on personal virtue, founded in a knowledge of fundamental principles, which of itself is amply sufficient to insure virtuous practice. The summit of excellence, the golden medium, or pathway of universal rectitude in accordance with the pervading laws of nature, is the object sought by wise and holy men.

The highest practical point of moral goodness and beauty, is agreement with nature as regulated by the unalterable ordinations of heaven, and consentaneous with reason, its grand and ultimate aim. Such is the celebrated wisdom of China; resplendent in the cultivation of virtue that diffuses its regenerating influences throughout society, while it reposes on the undisturbed heights of perfect tranquillity. But this object, in order to its being sought, must be thoroughly known: for it cannot be sought aright unless the mind be in a fixed and peaceful state, by which it is prepared for calm, deliberate investigation—the undoubted precursor of desired success. On this system the mind of the perfect man is a transcript of the visible universe. Its profundity may be compared to nature's deepest caverns, its altitude to the sublimity of heaven, and its substratum to the solidity of earth. It has, moreover, its ideal centre, round which its powers and perfections continually revolve with undeviating rec-

titude: and hence the extravagant language employed to describe the attainments and practice of virtuous men.

Knowledge, the property of every inquiring, diligent mind, is sufficient to purify the heart, rectify the principles, elevate the understanding, control the affections, and govern the conduct. The most esteemed sages of antiquity were distinguished by nothing superior to the spirit of inquisition which they carried into the laws of matter, both in its original and organized state; into the structure of society—in its habits and usages; and into the operations and powers of mind, so far as they understood its constitution. Unfounded theories on the original substance of which the universe was framed, and on its creation and government, mystified by absurd reasoning therefrom, constitute the chief of what is known of the Great First Cause. To complete this ideal fabric, man is invested with attributes appropriate only to God, whom it excludes from the dominion of his own world, and deprives of homage supremely due from creatures to their Creator as Lord of all. The deportment of the sage resembles the order and regularity of the seasons, which, irrespective of counteracting elements, revolve according to fixed laws. His moral influence may be compared to the canopy of heaven, which overshadows all things; his usefulness, to the fructifying power and nourishing properties of earth; and his sublime doctrine, to the confluence of light in the heavenly bodies, which irradiates surrounding objects. Nature's feebler energies are represented by flowing streams; her more impetuous impulses by extraordinary fertility and mighty changes: herein is displayed the majesty of heaven and earth, to which the sage's all-pervading influence bears a striking resemblance. Assum-

ing that perfect knowledge is the source of all virtue, Confucius applies it practically to the science of domestic and political economy. When a prince desires to exercise mild and benignant government over an empire, he proceeds, first, to the moral culture of his province; but it is under the conviction that, as a necessary prelude to success, his family must be virtuous and well regulated; that no efforts will avail to secure this object unless his person be adorned with virtue; that the source of personal excellence is a right state of heart, which cannot exist but with purity of motive; and that universally correct motives will never prevail except under the influence of profound knowledge. Prince and peasant have, therefore, but one duty to perform—that of restoring the mind to its original standard of purity and intelligence; for the procedure required by a well-regulated family will suffice to sway the destinies of a mighty empire. Confucius admonishes man to deport himself with due propriety, as a parent, a son, a younger and an elder brother, according to his position in society, which is composed of separate communities, united in consanguineous bonds, whose obligations involve principles and practice necessary for the safety, and sufficient for the happiness, of an entire kingdom.

Filial and fraternal affection constitute the foundation of external duties; and where the manners of a people are based upon virtue, rebellion and anarchy never arise. Dutiful submission to parents secures willing obedience to princes; and subordination of each person to his senior in the family is a pledge of respect to superior members of the body politic. Tenderness in a father towards his children, is a fine exemplification of the kind feeling with

which a ruler should regard his subjects, whose destinies are entrusted to his sole arbitration, so long as he governs with wisdom and discretion, and administers instruction, support, counsel, and correction, with intelligence and justice as an impartial yet deeply-affected observer. This patriarchal mode of government commends itself to infant communities by its simplicity, and its accordance with those natural principles on which domestic economy is based. For if, on the ground of absolute dependence, a family yield implicit submission to its head, so a kingdom, whose immunities and privileges flow only from the sovereign, is bound to concur in every expression of his will. It is a singular phenomenon in such a system, that it approves the dethronement of a prince whom his subjects unanimously oppose, and registers their sentiments in its archives as a decree from heaven, against which every one who seeks to uphold him is a transgressor. Its theory is despotic power without responsibility, while it admits in practice of most liberal popular influence, uniting the closest despotism with the freest democracy; on the maxim, perhaps, that extremes carried beyond a certain point contain elements of mutual approximation. It is not, however, inflexible principle, but expediency, which characterizes this theory: because success—the infallible token of heaven's approbation—determines not merely the power of the party whom it favours, but the justice of their cause. Theory and practice, not on this subject alone, but on every other where desertion of avowed principles has the prospect of substantial reward, stand diametrically opposed to each other. An exposition of motives and aims in certain acts is freely tendered; nor, granting to the expositor his own mode of illustration and

argument, can any complaint be made of unreasonable or unjust proceedings. This dissonance between sentiment and action will remind classical readers of the poet's admission—

"Video proboque meliora et deteriora sequor."

The influence of Confucius's ethical system with contemporary and succeeding governments, arises from the irresponsible power it ascribes to a virtuous prince, and the unbounded veneration of regal authority with which it inspires his subjects. Knowledge of it was originally sought with the ostensible object of improvement in morals and science; but being now the only accessible medium to official distinction and emoluments, its boasted power of moral renovation is merged in purposes of secular ambition. No code of morals, or combination of abstract principles, would, through so many successive ages, amid the revolutions and vicissitudes of society, have imbued with its spirit, and modified by its influence, a despotic form of government, itself the subject of numerous changes, had it not favoured the notion of absolute dominion as exercised by the sovereigns of China. Moreover, since it is universally approved by the people, it cannot be altogether unfriendly to their interests. Perhaps its benign aspect on domestic habits may tend to soften the rigour of its political restrictions; especially since honours and rewards of office are open to general competition, with the avowed object of selecting those only who excel in fine writing and acquaintance with the classic lore of antiquity.

But it will be necessary to notice the practical duties which Confucius enforced on his disciples in their social and political relations, whose system excludes respon-

sibility to the Supreme Being. Three important bonds, necessary to the subsistence of society, are faithfulness between prince and minister, reverence between father and son, and difference of rank between husband and wife; duties which the subordinates in these relations are bound to observe; the wife cultivating a proper sense of her inferiority, the son yielding profound veneration, and the minister preserving his fidelity inviolate. The number three was probably suggested by the three powers in nature, which is the model of imitation to the sage, the moralist, and the legislator. So also the abstract virtues, which generate whatever is lovely and valuable in human intercourse, are reduced to five; because five original elements were wrought up into the composition of the universe. These virtues are, *benevolence*, *righteousness*, *propriety*, *wisdom*, and *sincerity*. Benevolence is a virtue which heaven exercises towards all creatures; especially towards man in supplying his wants, pitying his infirmities, and relieving his distresses. It is characteristic of the feelings which a virtuous prince cultivates towards his subjects, who, while he seeks their welfare with the skill and affection of a mother, imitates the disinterested tenderness of heaven. The parent and the patriot strive to excel in the same high attainment, the one to cherish his family, the other to promote the well-being of his country. It includes, however, moral excellence, on which the charitable disposition it inculcates is grafted; for whatever generosity exists, if the conduct be disfigured with vices, there can be no genuine benevolence; hence the term is also used by moral philosophers to denote perfect virtue. Selfishness, the most formidable antagonist of this principle, is professedly extirpated by the higher class of

moralists. Confucius, it is said, was destitute of *selfishness, prejudice, bigotry,* and *egotism.* He found the first of these the prevailing evil of his day, and opposed it by all his authority and influence. Corrupt men did not scruple to enter office for the sake of its emoluments, under princes whose government was tyrannical and hurtful to the people, and whose principles were opposed to the renowned doctrines of antiquity. He expelled from his community a disciple who had amassed riches by extortion; and denounced another who coveted gain, as violating the will of heaven. Human nature, as it is modified by love of present benefits, was thoroughly studied, and to some extent understood, by the best moralists and legislators of China. But whatever acuteness might be displayed in detecting the weaknesses and foibles of man, no adequate skill was discovered in providing a remedy against them. The fallacy of the system which is to cure every evil, consists in ascribing original virtue and independent power to human nature. Self must be annihilated, and private views sacrificed to public virtues, a general love to all, founded on perfect virtue, and distinguished in its operations by fidelity and integrity, must be created by a being whose heart is prone to self-love, and utterly averse from the restraints imposed by a higher power. Where such absurdities and follies constitute the highest wisdom of which enlightened Pagans can boast, the necessity of Divine Revelation as a source of infallible guidance, alike applicable to the most opposite modifications of human depravity, and the accompanying influences of the Holy Spirit to render it available, is seen in the strongest light.

Justice, or righteousness, is the next virtue in order on the moral code. It is not always easy to ascertain the meaning of this and kindred terms from native writers, who use them with much latitude of signification. Justice represents what is right between man and man, flowing from disinterested principles, and appropriate to some civil or social relation, not what is merely correct, but what is generous and noble in sentiment. It is an external operation, opposed to benevolence, which is an internal virtue. But it contains no notion similar to the idea of that pure, perfect, independent property ascribed by the Scriptures to Jehovah, as constituting the basis and essence of his proceedings towards man. The sages of China have no idea of applying their conceptions of natural justice, such as they are, to the relationship man bears to God; nor do they recognize the obligations of human creatures to his moral government. That union of justice and implicit obedience which marks the intercourse between an immaculate ruler and his subjects, is excluded from their ethical systems, which, however, seem on some occasions darkly to intimate the ways of Providence and the avenging footsteps of the Deity. Justice is a term much applied to public-spirited individuals, who undertake office on the approved principles of the sages, and maintain high moral feeling in the discharge of their duties. Propriety and rectitude are its constituent principles. It is opposed at every point to sordid purposes of gain, and inspires its votaries with a resolution to do right, fearless of consequences.

According to the records of Chinese history, many such men have stood forward, as the champions of liberty, ready to sacrifice life in its defence. During the reign of

the present emperor, two ministers exhibited, in a memorial complaining of abuses, an independent and determined spirit seldom equalled, at the close of which they informed his majesty, that should he subject them to the axe or boiling caldron, they were not afraid. The emperor, however, declared that they were great and faithful ministers, imbued with the spirit of celebrated ancient statesmen, whose freedom of speech should not injure their reputation: this, however, is a rare case. From the use of this word to express charitable purposes, it may be inferred that benevolence is considered as an act of justice to the destitute. Orphans or others adopted into a family are called children of justice: a charity school is a just school, similar to the Rabbinical use of the Hebrew word *tsedaka*. Any public institution, or object in which the community have a common property, is designated by this term. It is also used to denote fidelity in animals. Uncorrupted faithfulness, which springs from perfect benevolence, is essential to the character of a just man, whether in a public or private station. Such is the theory of Chinese moralists on this point.

Propriety of deportment in civil stations, and accustomed *rites* in religious worship, are of the utmost moment, as the external form in which the virtues of the mind must be enshrined. If we may borrow the assistance of etymology,—and it is by knowledge of language that our acquaintance with popular customs and manners is improved,—"the first idea of the term *le*, 'ceremony or propriety,' is that of footstep, the footsteps or traces to be observed in worshipping the gods: it is composed of *she*,—as already mentioned,—'supernatural manifestation,' and *le*, 'a vessel used in certain rites.'" Whence

the notion of intercourse with superior beings in rites of sacrifice, seems to have had an early existence. Many of those gods were deified men who had rendered important services on earth. Others were deceased ancestors, whose supposed presence rendered due decorum in the forms of worship essential to its acceptableness. Propriety, therefore, demands special attention in the interment of the dead. For since parents during life are protected by the laws of filial piety from the morose demeanour or inconsiderate levity of their children, so, when they are buried, the rites of sepulture require to be performed in a devout spirit, and with corresponding gravity of deportment. Funeral honours would be deemed incomplete, even though the prescribed regulations were observed to the letter, if the countenance of the chief mourner assumed an improper aspect.

Of so much moment is outward appearance, that correct feeling, how unequivocally soever it might be manifested, would be insufficient to atone for the want of due order, or for any transgression of its forms. Hence Confucius says, in funeral ceremonies the most difficult part of the duty consists in the countenance. The same love of ceremony pervades the constitution of society. It is seen in the family, where it regulates domestic duties, by assigning to each member his proper station, and exacting from him punctilious attention to etiquette. It dictates suitable modes of communication between host and guest, controls personal behaviour, draws the line of demarcation between individuals of different rank, and ordains proper forms of intercourse in society. To the assumed importance of propriety may be attributed the general politeness for which the Chinese are distinguished. It is with them

a national virtue, and forms part of their education. They have a work, with which all scholars ought to be familiar, expressly written on the subjects of dress; mourning; ceremonies at marriages and funerals; sacrifices; forms to be observed at sacred places; village feasts; utensils; games, with other similar things. Since transition from practical virtues to outward observances is among the tendencies of human nature, vain forms may be multiplied, where few or no solid proofs of moral excellence exist. No people pride themselves on their urbanity more than the Chinese; and if this accomplishment may be estimated according to the amount of duplicity which it involves, they certainly can urge strong claims to be considered as the politest people on the face of the earth; for, having insinuated itself into personal habits, it has extended its influence through all relative connections and dependencies, until it has entirely moulded the national character into its own form. The ancients considered propriety as the body in which important virtues were most lucidly displayed; but the spirit deemed essential to animate it, their descendants have sacrificed to the love of outward appearance. It is a powerful spell to bind the affections, warp the understanding, demoralise the conduct, and deprave the heart. If conscience ever rouse them from lethargic slumbers to a sense of danger, they are lulled into their wonted security by attention to mere forms. Ceremonial observances are sanctioned by government, and in various ways made to harmonise with popular prejudice. The court, which dazzles by its splendour, and overawes by its authority, with all the pomp of circumstance attending sacrificial and other rites, sets the example of this superstition, and is eagerly followed by

the multitude, who venerate its proceedings as a transcript of heaven and nature.

Wisdom is an attribute held in great esteem by the Chinese. It is inseparably connected with holiness; but, alas! how debased in its nature, when compared with the holy intelligence created by divine influence. Inspired men form a far more lowly estimate of themselves than heathen sages, who do not scruple to assert their moral perfection, and to arrogate properties appropriate only to the Divinity. Though subjects which occupy their minds are of very limited extent, they are celebrated as omniscient beings describing a circle of universal influence. The sage meditates in solitude on a few erroneous notions which he has imbibed as first principles, until he persuades himself that he has arrived at the impassable barrier of perfect wisdom. Much is said in praise of constantly passing backwards and forwards over the fields of knowledge, as a bird with untiring wing hovers over some endeared locality. Confucius says, "At fifteen I was devoted to literature; at thirty I was fortified in doctrine; at forty I had no scruples; at fifty I understood the decrees of heaven; at sixty my ear was obedient (I comprehended whatever I heard), and at seventy I followed the purposes of my heart without transgression." The professed acquirements of sages are not only destitute of all moral power over their characters to remind them of their responsibility, and the duty of penitence at the footstool of heaven, but, on the contrary, fill the mind with pride and ambition, whose direct tendency is to withdraw it from God, and elevate a frail, sinful mortal to the position He alone should occupy. Notwithstanding that such epithets as profound, pure, sublime, and perfect, are

applied to their wisdom, its highest practical value is to control human nature by the influence of its mysterious character. Its professed object is human happiness, by means of government and social order; and the methods of attaining it are meditation on *heaven, earth,* and *man.* It is undeniable, that acquaintance with human nature is essential to the legislator and philosopher; but he who is ignorant of the sacred Scriptures, though he obtain much useful knowledge by studying the principles on which men act towards each other, and their common aim in mutual intercourse, cannot be said to have acquired the true philosophy of the human mind or morals.

Sincerity, the last in order of this class of virtues, is described as the first of inherent excellencies, and allied to perfect intelligence.* It is the way by which heaven holds intercourse with man, and the path in which human beings should walk. It is the foundation of esteem and influence, acquired in society by filial obedience, the accredited mode of obtaining the confidence of superiors, which would be withheld from a disobedient son on the ground of his supposed insincerity. Without a knowledge of doctrine, perfect sincerity is unattainable. The first class of moralists possess this virtue without solicitude to acquire it, and freely pursue the invariable principle of right without effort. From a section in the Chung Yung,

* The original term is 信 *sin,* which means, "a man of his word; sincere; unsuspicious; unwavering; true to one's word; truth; to believe; to trust; faith." Native authorities define it, "words which remain unchanged." *Ching,* sincerity of intention, precedes words; *sin,* sincerity of declaration, succeeds them. According to this explanation, *ching* is the internal virtue; *sin* is the external expression of it. The sentiments in the text are drawn principally from the Chung Yung, a standard work on moral philosophy, which uses *ching,* not *sin;* but since *sin,* as one of the five virtues, is usually rendered *sincerity,* the illustrations are perfectly relevant.

it appears that sincerity, as an original virtue of the mind, from which perfect wisdom springs spontaneously, is peculiar to the highest class of sages; and that that sincerity is found only in men of an inferior grade, which must be attained subordinately to wisdom by a course of study: but the two virtues are inseparable, for whichever pre-exists in the mind, it generates the other. Perfection may be thought a better rendering of the original on some occasions than sincerity; but it is difficult adequately to express such Chinese terms by a single word, in tongues now consecrated to the service of Christianity, on account of their varied use and application to distinct objects by different writers. The definition of the word is, "without guile; without admixture; of one mind; sincere; true; honest; — sincerity; truth." If this virtue had been chosen as a national characteristic, not only to be set at defiance in practice, but to form the most striking contrast to existing manners, a more appropriate one than sincerity could not have been found. So opposed is the public and private character of the Chinese to genuine sincerity, that an enemy might have selected it as ironically descriptive of their conduct, in contrast with their pretensions. Falsehood, duplicity, insincerity, and obsequious accommodation to favourable circumstances, are national features remarkably prominent. These vices are displayed most strongly towards those from whom benefits are expected, and are quite consistent with contempt and rude treatment of supposed inferiors. Giving credit to the sages of their nation as wise observers of human nature, their system was designed to be corrective of prevailing evils, which we may therefore conclude to be selfishness, injustice, indecorum, folly, and insincerity.

Assuming outwardly, without a corresponding change of heart, virtues opposed to these vices, because sanctioned by names held in supreme veneration, the wide diversity between sentiment and deportment, and the peculiarity of their manners, seem to be accounted for. The social and political relations can be discriminated only by those whose sincerity is of the highest grade,—who alone can trace the outlines of government for an empire, and comprehend the mode in which heaven and earth produce and sustain the creation. External ornament, or display of virtues really possessed, is contrary to the taste of wise men, who describe the highest excellence, whether denominated perfection, sincerity, reason, or virtue, as without "sound or colour," and disposing him in whom it dwells to pursue the noiseless tenour of his way without ostentation and tumult, but yet with the greatest effect: for while sincerity produces self-perfection, it issues in practice entirely agreeable to reason, and overawes others by its commanding influence. It is therefore essential to the superior man, who duly estimates its importance as the origin and consummation of all things.

In the section of the Chung Yung, from which these sentiments are taken, it is said, "benevolence is the source of self-perfection, and knowledge the means of rendering others perfect." The same authority supplies the following description of sincerity; "the utmost sincerity is interminable, unceasing, enduring, splendid, extensive, and solid, each of which properties is related to the other as cause and effect, while it ascends and displays its brilliancy. By a solidity that equals the earth, its sustaining power is developed in the support of material objects; by a loftiness and splendour emulative of heaven, they are

comprehended under its overshadowing influences; and by an interminable extent and duration, they are rendered absolutely perfect. The proprietor of this virtue cannot be concealed; for he will appear without showing himself, effect renovation without moving, and create perfection without acting: it is the law of heaven and earth, whose way is solid, substantial, lofty, illustrious, vast, and unchanging." Renovation of the human species is the ultimate end to be attained by sincerity and its concomitant doctrines. But how presumptuous are the pretensions of deluded men, who undertake to guide others by the darkness of their own depraved minds. Some ancient worthies are said to equal heaven,—to be omniscient and omnipresent, and to possess endless purity. Much stress is laid on the demeanour in private, where, it is supposed, motives to cultivate virtue are far fewer than when under the eye of the world. The greatest inconsistency prevails among moral writers in delineating, even on their own plan, the character of the perfect sage. While Confucius at one time exalts himself as impeccable and perfectly holy, he at another confesses that there are four things belonging to the superior man which he is unable to practise. First, his requirements from his son exceed the services which he is able to render to his father; secondly, the service he demands from a minister he cannot perform towards his prince; thirdly, the duties he enjoins on a younger brother he fails to fulfil to his elder brother; and, fourthly, the obligations of friendship under which he is laid he feels inadequate to discharge.

The superior man—a phrase in frequent use among classical writers—is a practical character, satisfied with his own sphere of influence, and diligent in performing its

appropriate duties. He can enjoy wealth, and not be corrupted by its influence;—endure poverty, without being betrayed into a murmuring spirit;—bear heavy afflictions with the utmost resignation, and render civilities to strangers in the spirit of genuine sympathy. If he fills an elevated situation, he abhors contemptuous treatment of inferiors; and if he occupies a subordinate office, he disdains obsequiously to flatter the great. His moral feelings exclude dissatisfaction; the way of heaven above does not superinduce fretfulness; the conduct of man below excites no resentment; but he reposes in tranquillity, calmly awaiting the will of Heaven. While he is upright and firm, his own sayings are not carried into effect with blind partiality, whether right or wrong. Confucius compares him to an archer, who, when he fails to hit the target, blames only himself. To attain this eminence, however, his early career must have exemplified benevolence, justice, propriety, wisdom, and sincerity. The cultivation of the fine arts, music, archery, horsemanship, writing, and arithmetic, must also have yielded him pleasure. "A heart of feeling and commiseration illustrates benevolence; a heart ashamed of vice displays justice; a heart reverential and respectful, accords with propriety; and a heart which discriminates right from wrong, gives effect to wisdom: all these virtues are the original properties of our nature, and are not infused into us from without." Such is the opinion of Mencius. His predecessor and prototype, Confucius, remarks, "when solid properties prevail more than ornamental acquirements, their possessor is a rustic; and when embellishments exceed the more substantial virtues, he is a coxcomb: but solidity and ornament, blended in due proportion, constitute the superior man.

Again, knowledge of correct principles is not so valuable as love to them; and love to them is less worthy of esteem than delight in them,"—sentiments which a commentator expounds by reference to different kinds of grain, whose edible properties are first discriminated, then desired, and afterwards used with pleasure; hence knowledge pertains to the existence of virtue; desire or love involves a taste for it without its attainment; and delight presupposes its possession with the highest relish.

Such are the opinions which influence the myriads of human beings within the limits of the Chinese empire. If true temporal prosperity must be based on the cultivation of correct principles towards the sovereign of the universe, how wretchedly deficient such systems leave man of all the ordinary enjoyments of human life, which the least favoured portion of the community in Christian countries participate. The practical results of the system just reviewed will be seen in the next section on government, which avowedly forms its plans on the principles laid down by Confucius—"the instructor of ten thousand ages."

SECTION V.

POLITICAL STATE OF THE CHINESE—ANCIENT DYNASTIES—TARTAR CONQUEST—IMPERIAL FAMILY — PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS — SUPREME TRIBUNALS—DIFFERENT DEGREES OF NOBILITY.

HITHERTO we have regarded man in his social and moral condition, which ascertains his personal responsibilities to the Supreme Ruler of the Universe. He is now to be considered as a member of the body politic, subject to the control of a regular system of government, whose constitution, so far as it can be investigated, will throw considerable additional light on the state of the public mind in China, and on the position assumed by so large a population towards the rest of the world. The collective influence of three hundred millions of our species must, under any circumstances, be of overwhelming importance; and whether that influence tends to enslave human souls and augment the sum of human misery, or to promote happiness and freedom commensurate with the circle which it describes, is an inquiry on which no benevolent mind can enter without the deepest solicitude. Our design is not only to give a prominent outline of the constitution of the Chinese government, and its operations on the people when distributed into distinct communities, but to isolate individuals, and to determine, from the mutual influence of different classes, what is the effect of the

whole administration on the persons, families, and property of its subjects. The form of government subsisting in China is absolute despotism, which descends by hereditary right, where there is no opposing will of the emperor, to the nearest male heir of the crown, a law precluding females having been enacted in the third century of the Christian era.* In ancient times, China was divided into numerous clans, each of which under its own chieftain was constantly engaged in aggressions on its neighbour, so that force of arms frequently prevailed to set aside the direct succession to the throne. The origin of the empire, extending backwards into remote antiquity, is enveloped in an obscurity hitherto unpierced by the feeblest ray of truth. The fabulous æra commencing with *Pwan-koo*, which embraces eighty thousand years, terminated about seven centuries after the Mosaic date of the creation. The authentic annals, according to the best historians, begin from the reign of Fŭh-he, whom, with some of his celebrated successors, we have already described. The space of a thousand years elapsed from this sovereign to Yu, the Noah of the Chinese, by whom the first regular dynasty—Hea—was set up; which having existed in varied circumstances of historical interest during four centuries, was succeeded by Shang, whose entire duration comprehended about six hundred years, and then yielded up its destinies to Chow, which flourished in all the vigour of political maturity for the space of eight hundred years more.

These three dynasties exhibit the oldest and most

* The terms in which it was enacted are, "From this time no female shall assist in the government;" on which a commentator remarks,—"Excellent law, worthy of being a master."

venerated forms of Chinese polity; and to say the least, have preserved patriarchal customs and manners in greater simplicity and purity than any other. During the Shang dynasty, seven years of great drought and famine commenced in China; at the close of which, history relates, the king went into a solitary place under mulberry bushes to pray: he took the six sins of which human beings are most commonly guilty, and charged them upon himself (that is, made himself a vicarious sacrifice for the whole nation), whereupon, before his supplications were ended, the rain fell in torrents covering a space of several miles. The king offered the following prayer in the mulberry forest. "Do not for one man's perverseness take away the lives of millions; I confess I am guilty; my government is not economical; the nobles and the common people are my subjects; have mercy upon them and preserve them; do not despise the desolate and afflicted." Eyin (a good minister who had been previously dismissed) having been restored to the government, gave suitable warnings and admonitions to the king, and soon after requested leave to retire to his native village. Two things are worthy of remark in this narrative:—the coincidence in point of time between this drought and the seven years' famine in Egypt, both occurring as nearly as can be ascertained about 1720 years B. C.,* and the avowed efficacy of prayer in removing a calamity acknowledged to be justly inflicted for the sins of the nation. The king, as the high priest of the empire, was not backward in a season of distress to appeal to the Supreme Ruler, whom in prosperity he seldom or never acknowledged. Whether

* A. M. 2284.

he directed his supplications to any other object than the material heavens, is a question which cannot be solved; and yet chieftains, sages, and emperors in successive ages have alike confessed their obligations to one Supreme Existence by stated acts of worship and forms of prayer. It is a sentiment of frequent occurrence in Chinese writers, "Heaven rejects the wicked, whom therefore no efforts can save, and protects the virtuous, against whom no enemy can prevail:" sentiments exemplified in the destruction of Shang, whose last kings contrasted with the first princes of Chow, established on its ruins, exhibit the opposite points of virtue and vice in the strongest light. Chow-sin and an abandoned woman of his court inflicted the most exquisite torments on the unoffending people, merely to gratify an insatiable love of cruelty. A narrative of his infamous conduct occupies a considerable space in the history of this dynasty. To say that he was a sensualist, a debauchee, a tyrant, a murderer, is a faint delineation of his detestable character, unless each point be combined with all that is diabolical in malignity, ruthless in tyranny, and revolting in cruelty. The singular ferocity to which this wretch and his paramour attained, seems to require an illustration or two. His extravagance, which finally ruined him, was first developed, says his faithful minister, in the use of ivory chopsticks. To suit this elegance, splendid dishes and costly viands* were provided, which the people admired and imitated; thus the king to gratify his passion for extravagance ruined his country. The historian's account of him is, that in natural abilities he surpassed all his ministers; that, with sagacity to repel reproof,

* It is curious that these delicacies in a note of the commentator are said to be "bears' feet, and the viscera of leopards."

eloquence to gloss over falsehood, muscular power to overcome wild beasts, the loudest voice in the empire, and pre-eminence of mental and physical force in all points, his dissolute morals, from excessive devotion to wine and lust, sunk him far below the brutes. In his wars a female was taken captive, who, like himself, delighted in the most wicked and inhuman amusements, a great part of which she derived from the tormenting of her fellow-creatures. To evince his affection, her counsel was always followed; whom she loved he ennobled, and whom she disliked he murdered. Persons were employed to compose obscene songs, which were sung to wanton tunes, accompanied with amorous dances. A terrace was erected in Pih-chih-le nearly a mile broad and a thousand cubits high, which was seven years in building: there was a house of coral, whose doors were garnished with gems, granaries were built for the subsistence of the guards and servants of the establishment, and other apartments erected for dogs, horses, and curiosities collected to fill them. A still more splendid establishment was maintained at Sha-kew, where instruments of music and military weapons were extensively accumulated; there was a lake of wine surrounded with trees from which delicate viands were suspended, and among which numerous men and women passed long nights in scenes of debauchery and drunkenness. The Chinese, however, in theory true to their principles, while they relate that the wickedness of these demons in human form must meet with their reward, assure us that they were both ignominiously slain by a successful revolt of their subjects.

Chow, which flourished four or five centuries before Christ, is considered by the Chinese as the best model of

government among the ancients; and there were then, according to Confucius's history, which comprehends two hundred and fifty years of this period, not fewer than a hundred and twenty states. The principles of its government were denominated, by way of eminence, royal doctrines, and are often proudly referred to by philosophers and ethical writers as the basis of sound legislation. Not long subsequent to this period, seven nations contended for the supremacy, of which one, named Tsin, prevailed over the other six, and divided the empire into thirty-six principalities; but its dominion was of very short duration. To it the Eastern and Western Han dynasties succeeded for the space of four hundred years, two centuries before and two after the commencement of the Christian æra. The sovereigns Heaou-ching-te and Heaou-gae-te reigned over China when the Saviour of the World sojourned in the land of Judea. The province of Ho-nan, of which Lŏ-yang was the capital, seems to have been the seat of this dynasty. At the same period, the three states Wei, Shŭh, and Woo, were contending for superiority, the events of which gave rise to a celebrated historical novel called "The Three Kingdoms," whose style and arrangement are much admired by the Chinese literati. Towards the close of this once famous dynasty, the capital was removed to Nanking, in the province of Keang-nan, near whose coast Chow-shan, the island recently taken by the British arms, is situated. Six dynasties, comprising altogether about three hundred and fifty years, now followed Han in rapid succession. Tang, from which the Chinese of Fŭh-kèèn province still proudly designate themselves men of Tang, succeeded the "six dynasties," commencing from about the middle of the seventh century and closing in the ninth.

The "five dynasties," which together did not exceed the term of fifty years, took their rise about this period. Sung was the designation of the succeeding family, which maintained its supremacy for the space of three hundred years, until the rise of the Yuen or Mung-Koo Tartar dynasty, whose first emperor was *Cheyuen*, called by European writers Coblai: but it did not flourish more than seventy or eighty years, although it seems to have been very active both in warlike and literary pursuits. The subsequent and last Chinese dynasty, Ming, existed about two hundred and fifty years, during which Peking first became the capital of the empire; whose failing fortunes ended in an entire revolution of the supreme authority, and made way for the 'great pure dynasty,' the Tartar family that now occupies the throne.

The Manchow Tartar Prince, when about to subjugate China, wrote down seven grievances, or causes of indignation 恨 as his motives for undertaking the war, and spread them with great solemnity before Heaven, whose aid he confidently invoked. "The first crime to be revenged," says the Tartar monarch, "is the commencement of hostilities by the Chinese; the second crime to be revenged, is the violation of a solemn treaty not to pass certain boundaries; for, though ratified by an oath, and the conditions thereof engraven on a stone, to the effect that whichever nation transgressed the limits should be destroyed, Ming, nevertheless, crossed the frontier with troops to assist my foes; the third crime to be revenged is, that when I, agreeably to my oath, attacked him for committing depredations in my territory, he disregarded the former treaty, complained of my conduct, put to death my envoy, and slew ten of my subjects whom he had seized on the

borders; the fourth crime to be revenged is, Ming's having assisted the Yĕhih, and caused my daughter, already betrothed, to be given to another person of the Mung-koo nation; the fifth crime to be revenged is, Ming's having expelled my people from the Chae-ho hill and places adjacent, which were for many generations my frontiers, and cultivated by my subjects, who were still not allowed to reap the fruits of their labour; the sixth crime to be revenged is, the insult offered to me in a letter sent by a special envoy purposely to vilify me, while entire credit was given to the statement of Yĕhih, who had committed sins against Heaven; the seventh crime to be revenged is, the conduct of Ming in exciting nations whom I had subdued to rebel against me, and aiding the sovereign to recover his kingdom. When proximate states contend, the rule is—obey the will of Heaven and conquer—oppose it and perish. How can the slain live again? Who can give back the people taken captive? Why does Ming cherish resentment against me alone? Nations have united their forces against me, and Heaven has overthrown them, while my country has flourished like the spring. Ming assists the Yĕhih, while under severe chastisement, whereby he opposes the will of Heaven, and confounds right and wrong."

To revenge himself for these seven injuries, was the avowed purpose of the Manchow Prince in the subjugation of China, whose success became the source of the Great Pure Dynasty—the appellation by which the reigning family has always designated itself. Like other royal families, however, the Manchow Tartar is not satisfied with the honours conceded by simple facts, but must seek to adorn its annals with fiction, and to dignify its descent by the fable

of a supernatural origin. Traditional genealogy is appealed to, no less by him who glories in the acquisition of the empire by the sword and the bow, than by the lineal descendants of Yaou and Shun. Lakes and mountains, felicitous birds and rivers, divine births, and supernatural interposition in the hour of danger, are the extraordinary characteristics by which the future glory of the Tartar dynasty was first revealed. The Tartars, probably to conciliate the Chinese, avow their firm reliance on the inscrutable decrees of Heaven, by which corrupt dynasties perish, and others rise on their ruins to perpetuate a virtuous influence. A divine magpie, called the bird of glad tidings, was the precursor of the family glory of the Chinese Tartars, first, by placing a certain fruit in the garments of an ancient female ancestor, by which, while bathing in a pool of water at the foot of the long white mountain, she became pregnant, and immediately brought forth a son of extraordinary form, who could speak as soon as he was born, and to whom it was announced, "Heaven has begotten you to give stability to disturbed nations." When he lost his mother, who disappeared shortly after his birth, he placed himself, it is said, in a bark, and floated down the stream of a certain river, on the bank of which he at length framed a seat of willows and sat down. His fame soon attracted the attention of contending chieftains, one of whom, struck with his wonderful appearance, spoke of him to his own clan, who came out into the desert to question him respecting his origin. On hearing him declare that he was born of a celestial female, and was ordained by Heaven to restore them to tranquillity, they all exclaimed, "Heaven has brought forth a holy one," and at once appointed him to

be their king. Their abode was fixed in a wilderness east of the long white mountain, which they denominated *Mwan-chow*. The second incident connected with the felicitous interposition of the magpie, is said to have occurred when, through an insurrection of the people, all the family had been murdered but one, who ran away and escaped his pursuers, from the circumstance of a magpie alighting on his head, which caused him to be mistaken for the trunk of an old tree. From this story the Tartars venerate the magpie, prohibit its being shot, and have an annual ceremony in commemoration of the event on the spot where it happened.

The next person of eminence, now designated the sixth ancestor, having vindicated the honours of his family, and reinstated it in its ancient glory, inherited the name of Gae sin keŏ-lŏ, the Chinese mode of spelling the Tartar name of the extraordinary youth just referred to, the two last syllables of which are transmitted to his descendants, together with the distinctive badge of a red girdle, as the ensign of hereditary dignity. The words 滿洲 *mwan chow*, by which the Chinese spell *mantshur* or *manstchoo* mean in Chinese a full or complete island; but as they are, probably, the mere sounds of the Tartar appellation, they furnish no clue to the meaning of the original term.

Such is a brief chronological sketch of the vicissitudes which have befallen the vast empire whose government we now proceed to examine.

The emperor, designated Imperial Supreme, Holy Lord, Most High, His Majesty—literally the Court—with other similar epithets, is the source of all authority in the legislative as well as executive department of the state. Pe-

king has been the capital of the empire since the reign of Yung-lo,* in the centre of which stands the imperial city, five miles in circumference, enclosing within it the sacred city, which occupies a third of its dimensions. The capital has nine gates, the number to correspond perhaps to the nine divisions of the Chinese territory after the Deluge. Within the meridian gate, the imperial council chamber is situated, where the ministers of the sovereign assemble to deliberate on national affairs, the number of whom is six, three Tartars, who take precedence, one being prime minister, and three Chinese: their designation is "worshipping assistants," persons who have done obeisance by knocking heads, on being appointed to office—an initiatory ceremony similar in its import to that of kissing hands in the British court. The most ancient official title, under the dynasty Hea, denoted "objects of complacency and confidence." Nobles of the first rank who conducted the sacred music connected with the great state ceremonies, were honoured with the appellations *great* and *perpetual*, as expressive of their desire that the powers whom the imperial family worshipped would perpetuate its dominion through all ages. In the province of Sze-chuen, during the dynasty Chow, the chief ministers were called, "great teacher," as the instructor and example of his majesty; "great assistant," as the only solid basis of support; and "great preserver," because it was their duty to protect their sovereign both in the practice of virtue and the administration of justice. The same titles, with the exception of "inferior" substituted for "great" to denote their subordination, were applied to assistant statesmen, who attended on princes of

* A.D. 1423.

the blood or on the heir apparent, whose name they were permitted to assume; but such epithets with the present government are merely honorary. It was under the Tang dynasty that the title " great learned scholar," applied by the reigning family to its six chief ministers and other officers about the court, was first introduced as significant of the statesman's duty, which was to take care of the government library and records, and to instruct kings and princes. In the eleventh century, during the Sung dynasty, literary halls were instituted, from which ministers of state and other officers were selected, who were distinguished with titles expressive of the nature of their functions. Great variety of honours, as might be expected from the diversity of administration in this long period of Chinese history, were distributed by the emperors among their dependents and friends. In the offices of the first ministers of the state ten subordinate persons perform the duties of secretaries and clerks, on whom it devolves to record the substance of the imperial will delivered at the daily audiences granted to ministers, in three books kept for the purpose—one to preserve the sovereign's sentiments and sayings generally, another to record his special commands, and a third to contain his replies to memorials sent from the provinces. Various changes in the administration have been made under the Tartar dynasty; the present, consisting of four principals and two assistants, alternately Tartar and Chinese, was introduced by Keen-lung, who began his reign near the middle of the eighteenth century. The assistants, however, being generally absent from court on special embassies or in the character of provincial governors, the four principals, associated with the presidents of the six

supreme courts, the head of the imperial clan, the military council, and other courts, assemble by express command to deliberate on important questions of state policy. Their duties comprise attendance on grand state ceremonies, civil and religious; such as sacrifices to the heavens, the earth, human spirits, and local deities; coronations of emperors; the bestowment of titles on members of the imperial family; and the presentation of memorials to the emperor. A special court is appointed through which remonstrances, petitions, and official documents addressed to his Majesty, are to pass to the ministers, who are charged with the duty of laying them before the sovereign. Memorials of an ordinary nature may be received in the Manchow, Chinese, and Mung-koo Tartar languages, for each of which secretaries and interpreters are attached to this court. In some cases, which are specified, they may be sent sealed to the emperor, but the usual practice is to send them to any of the "six boards" whom the matter may concern, or to the secretary of state for the home department. Different regulations have been adopted at different periods, for the purpose of avoiding, on the one hand, pompous, verbose, memorials, without, on the other, discouraging such as are useful and important. The law of the case is, that this court may reject open communications which are not according to the official standard, either in the number of words employed, or the subject-matter of their address; and that the ministers of state are authorized to examine all despatches sent to the emperor, except such as relate to foreign nations and to secret affairs in the provinces, which are ordered to be transmitted in an envelope under seal. Imperial edicts, composed by the Han-lin college,

after they have been transcribed by the Chinese and Tartar officials, are returned to the ministers, whose duty it is to apply the imperial seal.

Having had occasion to mention the Han-lin college,—"Pencil-forest-hall," which, though distinguished by a literary title, is chiefly political in its constitution and objects, it may be proper to introduce a brief notice of it in this place. It has two presidents, styled learned directors of the hall, a Tartar and a Chinese, of whom the former assumes the higher rank. There are twelve officers, six of each class, called learned readers, and learned expositors, of whom the former read sacred books to his majesty. Besides other readers and expounders divested of the appellative "learned," there is a certain number, who, from the meaning of their titles, appear to be devoted to the duty of selecting, revising, correcting, and arranging materials for publication. All national works are by command of his majesty edited under the sanction of this body, the names of whose superior officers are often inserted in the prefaces. Other officers, from their designations, appear to discharge the duties of superintending public proclamations. One of the members of this body fills the office of a recorder of events that transpire at the capital. It is the professed object of the imperial government to select ministers of state from this institution, according to their degree of literary eminence, some of whose members have frequently been appointed to the highest civil offices in the empire. It is not a seminary of instruction for the youth of the nation, but a senate to test literary attainments, and confer honorary degrees which often prove a passport to the most lucrative and influential posts in the empire. So much honour attends

the acquisition of these degrees, that vast efforts are made by numerous competitors to pass the examination with credit. The honours, however, may be purchased, but not without considerably reducing their value in the estimation of the people. Eminent classical scholars by virtue of their attainments are attached to the college, and the descendants of philosophers and sages, such as Confucius and Mencius, are members by birthright.

Various offices are established for the purpose of regulating the personal and domestic affairs of the sovereign. There is one to take cognizance of the branches of the imperial house, whose presiding officers are styled consanguineous kings, those who are related to the imperial blood, kings of principalities; the name of the thirty-six states into which China was divided, when it was first brought under the dominion of one ruler; Tartar nobles of high rank, generals, and princes of the royal family. Among appointments relating to the interior arrangements of the palace, are those which control her majesty's and the princes' households, and superintend the superior officers of state. The ancient office of imperial censors, advisers, remembrancers, examiners, or historians, as they have been variously designated, is still preserved. Two presidents, a Tartar and a Chinese, and four assistants, constitute the members of this court at the capital. It is their duty to exercise strict surveillance over the affairs of the prince, the magistracy, and the people; they are also allowed to offer their opinions in writing to the sovereign on all subjects of a public nature, but not to interfere with his private or domestic concerns. It is generally understood that their advice, how contrary soever to the will of his majesty, shall not endanger their lives, though

there are cases in which this rule has been violated; still if they presume to differ from him they must expect the rejection of their documents and his severest displeasure. Not only are they present in the metropolis of the empire, but in every province, where they act as spies on the local authorities, and as commissioners of surveillance and inquiry, which indeed is their chief modern employment. The ancient duties of these officials were to record the imperial will, two of whom stood in the emperor's presence, one on his right hand to make a memorandum of his movements, the other on his left to transcribe his sayings.

But passing on to more public matters, the six supreme courts, boards, or tribunals, as the term may be rendered, are the principal springs of the machinery employed in the operations of the Chinese government; the departments of which are magistracy, revenue, national rites, military affairs, punishments, and public works. These may be called the heads of the six divisions to which the laws of the land are reduced; and hence, by reviewing the extent and details of the authority of each board, access is obtained to a general knowledge of the laws. Of the boards in the order above specified, the first is the *Board of Civilians*, for superintending officers of all ranks throughout the empire, according to its title, which applies to several official grades, from the emperor down to a writer in a government office. It is composed of kings and princes of the Tartar races, both the Mung-koo and Mwan-chow, and of Chinese civilians. It is distinguished by the elevation and dignity of its members, by the number of its literary and ordinary assistants, and its official superiority to all other boards, whose officers are con-

strained to attend its sittings whenever business is transacted. Members of the imperial family, though not allowed to take any part in the proceedings, are required to be present in all its assemblies, and to report to the emperor any irregularity which may occur. Since it is composed of the classes of officers already mentioned, it would appear to form a house of the first estates of the realm to represent the principal tribes of the empire, all of which seem to have delegates but the Mohammedans, who do not constitute part of it, unless indeed officers from the " foreign court," which was established by the reigning family for the Mohammedan cantons, with the dependant states of Thibet and Tartary, who are expressly required to be present at its deliberations, be allowed to maintain their interests; of this, however, there is no direct evidence.

This board is one of vast influence, since it has the direction of all civil promotions, is responsible for the proper supply of vacant offices, examines into the periodical reports of the conduct of civilians, and awards punishment to official delinquents throughout the empire. But patronage is not the only power vested in it; it belongs to this board also to ascertain the rank of different officers, to regulate the laws by which they are to be appointed, promoted, rewarded, or punished, and to take cognizance of their merit and demerit according to a graduated scale, carefully preserved in every province, and regularly transmitted for its scrutiny. Some of the prevailing regulations are directly opposed to the spirit and tenor of European notions. Official persons guilty of certain offences in China are deprived for a term of years of their honours and emoluments, but not without the

hope of regaining both by a course of good behaviour during their period of degradation. The same hope of restoration to favour, on condition that their deportment is suitable, animates those who have been banished to the frontier; for the theory of the board is not to consider mere degradation for misconduct as tantamount to entire exclusion from office; but to decide each case by its individual merits, after the term of punishment has expired. Promotion is avowedly based on the same principle of personal desert. Civilians who have served their country well are advanced several steps, and their names and honours on promotion are inserted in the Peking Gazette for general circulation. Each of these degrees of rank equals one year; hence an officer having served successfully three or four years is advanced so many grades, and extraordinary merit on particular occasions is estimated as so many years' service; while one who has been degraded four or five steps may be restored to his honours and emoluments by as many years' meritorious behaviour. Officers found guilty of offences are punished by blows, fines, degradation, banishment, or dismissal; but may be restored to their rank after they have been dismissed, if they can pay for it, and are recommended by good conduct. Since this board takes cognizance of the court of the royal family, establishments for managing national affairs within the palace, the household of the sovereign, the colleges and courts of Peking, together with all official institutions in the provinces, necessarily involving difficult questions of state policy, its duties must be of a very arduous and complicated nature. Despatch in the performance of their public functions is not only urged on the supreme courts by the pressure of business, but secured

by law, which allows only five days for consultation on any matter referred by the sovereign.

Leave of absence is granted to officers on the death of their parents, on account of sickness, to offer oblations and sacrifices at the tombs of ancestors, to collect their bones for preservation in an urn, or to remove them to other graves, to attend their parents in sickness and old age, and perform other important domestic duties. It is a matter of necessity with officers on the death of parents to retire from the public service three years—the period of mourning required by the principles of filial piety. But the length of time granted for these objects, and on official business, is carefully prescribed, and its transgression visited with fines or degradation.

Public servants in China are punished not merely for personal misdeeds, but for *supposed* neglect of duty, when great calamities occur from fires, the overflowing of a river, the low state of cultivation, robberies, murders, evasion of the law by smugglers, embezzlement of property by inferior officers, drought, earthquakes, locusts, diminution of the revenue, and oppressive exactions from the people. These occurrences, and others like them, if not reported to his immediate superior by the officer under whose jurisdiction they take place, occasion the infliction of fines, or dismissal from office. But when secret societies, formed for seditious purposes, whose members as a pledge of mutual fidelity sometimes sip each other's blood, rise in open rebellion against the government, the officers of the district in which the insurrection occurs are much more severely punished, on the ground of maladministration as an exciting cause, or for want of proper vigilance, by which the evil might have been

prevented. Besides general rules, out of which numerous cases arise to require the interposition of this board, the law descends to the most minute and trivial occurrences, which amidst so many really important affairs are necessarily neglected. The principle involved, however, shows that the system of Chinese legislation is based on the responsibility of superiors for the conduct of their immediate dependents, irrespective of impracticabilities for which Chinese laws make no provision; so that each official person, from those near the throne, who occupy the largest sphere of delegated influence, descending step by step to the very lowest rank, has a portion of the community under his charge, for whose misconduct he is accountable. Should an untoward occurrence inflict injury on the state, it is attributed to culpable conduct in the responsible officer, though really innocent, for which he is liable to be punished. Governors of provinces, and imperial commissioners, are exposed to the loss of life, as well as office, if their official acts terminate unfavourably. The recent treatment of Lin, at Canton, is an example of the perilous responsibility of office in China.

The next in order is *the Board of Revenue*, literally the board of population, because the revenue is derived from the people over whom this board presides, whose numbers and condition must be ascertained before the resources of the empire can be made available. Revenue is raised by taxes on the land, which are paid partly in grain and partly in money, according to the nature of the soil, and the kind of produce it yields. In the early history of the Tartar dynasty a census of the whole population was taken, for the twofold object of levying a poll tax, and

ascertaining the number of males capable of military service. This tax was afterwards blended with the land tax, and finally interdicted; but the census was restored under other sovereigns. It was taken once in three or five years, by means of a report which the heads of tens and hundreds in each district made through the local magistrate to officers charged with its transmission to the emperor. The professed design of this enactment was, to be able to apportion government supplies according to the exigencies of the people in times of drought, famine, pestilence, and inundations in particular districts. The mode of carrying it into effect resembles that of the Egyptians, in requiring each family to have a list of its inmates suspended on a board outside the door, for the information of the police officer, who is expected to supply the government with correct returns. This method, if faithfully observed, would fix the amount of the population with great accuracy; but as the Chinese have several reasons for representing their families to be smaller than they are, false statements are, no doubt, frequently made. Many of the rules, by which this object is sought to be attained, are not only vexatious, but altogether impracticable; especially when applied to visitors in private houses, to strangers sojourning at temples, mosques, and other religious establishments, the heads of which are responsible in law for all their inmates, as well temporary as stated residents. Very different opinions have prevailed respecting the extent of the population of China, but no one who casts his eye over its immense territory, and considers the crowded state of its occupants, will be surprised that a large estimate has been framed of their numbers, which from native records,

not intended for the perusal of foreigners, seem, in less than a hundred years, to have augmented fifteen-fold: since at the beginning of the eighteenth century it was under twenty-four millions; and at the close of it, according to returns from the provinces, upwards of three hundred and seven millions, showing, as the emperor Kang-he observes, who states the fact, an increase of nearly fifteen-fold. The efficient support, control, and protection of so many millions, necessarily requires large resources of wealth and intelligence.

It will now be our object briefly to describe the methods of raising the revenue, with the other branches of public business superintended by this board. The land tax is fixed at so much an acre, according to the quality of the soil, and the amount raised—a certain sum having been deducted for expenses—is remitted from each province. The officers who collect this portion of the revenue are often guilty of oppressive and iniquitous exactions, from which more is suffered by the people than any other official department. The sum raised annually for the service of the state in Pih-chih-le, the province in which the court resides, is nearly two millions of taels of silver; in round numbers about six hundred thousand pounds sterling, from which two hundred and eighty thousand pounds are retained for current expenses. Ho-nan, which is the most productive of all the provinces, remits nearly three millions of taels of silver, and retains little more than one-eighth of its revenues for local expenses. Canton raises something short of nine hundred thousand taels, from which two hundred and forty-four thousand are deducted. Kwei-chow, which is the least productive of the whole, raises

seventy thousand taels, out of which it expends twenty-nine thousand. These sums are totally inadequate to the expenses of the empire, and hence a large field is open for extortion and oppression, to which recourse is had for supplies needed by the state, but not sanctioned by the laws. Still, besides the amount supplied in bullion, there are articles of consumption of which the government maintains a strict monopoly; and store-houses for grain contributed by the people, who raise annually upwards of three millions three hundred thousand measures; one-third being rendered by the province of *Keang-soo*, for the conveyance of which from all parts of the empire ten thousand boats are employed. Salt is a strictly government monopoly, superintended by this board. In one year of a late emperor its consumption amounted to nearly six millions and a half of yin (a yin is upwards of a hundred-weight). Jin-seng, the best of which is said to be found in Manchow Tartary, is superintended by the same authority, which gives to the Tartars the exclusive privilege of searching for it under the eight banners of the empire; and severely punishes those who presume to do so without leave. Mines of the precious and common metals are sources of public wealth, from which the government expects its prescribed proportion. Of the silver, copper, tin, iron, and lead mines in different parts of the empire, which might yield revenue, some are permitted to be worked and others forbidden, without any reason being assigned, but probably from fear of exhausting their resources. The precious metals, except by weight as any other commodity, are not employed in circulation. Red copper is the only coin current in China, a thousand of which (called tseen) make a tael or *leang*.

The mint, limited though it be, is under the care of this board, with occasional assistance from the board of works. In the province of Yun-nan, "gold sand" (kin-sha) is found in some of the rivers, of which the government expects a portion annually, according to the amount collected.

The transit of goods affords an opportunity of taxing them, whether it refers to imports, exports, or the internal trade. A small manuscript volume, entitled, "Regulations of the Custom-house dues at Canton," contains the rules by which foreign vessels are allowed to trade with China, and the duties imposed on articles of traffic between other provinces and Canton. It begins with foreign ships, whose admeasurement and cargo are rated according to the country from which it comes. The import dues of a foreign ship are eleven hundred and twenty-five taels, nine mace, six candareens: the export dues five hundred and thirty-three taels, eight mace of silver: the amount exacted on each article is also stated. Comparing the necessities of the empire with the sums yielded from this and other sources, it cannot but be obvious that the Chinese, whatever they may allege to the contrary, deem foreign trade of too much importance to be sacrificed to trifling rules of etiquette; for even with all the provision made by the government, pecuniary supplies are still inadequate to the demands of the state without unacknowledged fees and assessments, which in the foreign trade amount to large sums. The various custom-house duties levied at the confluence of large rivers inland, as well as on the sea-coast, may be supposed to yield a considerable annual income; but, after all, the local officers derive the greatest profit from such

resources. The Chinese, who from time immemorial had devised the agricultural tax as their permanent revenue, have never availed themselves fully of the commercial capabilities of their country, and herein appears their most remarkable deficiency as statesmen. The board of revenue takes cognizance of the expenditure, as well as the collection of the public money. Portions of it are distributed among the different boards; among military officers, civilians, judges, the superintendents of monopolies, custom-houses, and local magistrates, with various other officers; all which sums, as it regards the time and mode of disbursement, are regulated by this board. Salaries and allowances to members of the royal family are paid in kind, and in bullion: and though the sums appear but small, yet from the numerous dependents on the celestial treasury, its disbursements must be very considerable. To a prince of the highest rank an annual allowance is granted of ten thousand taels* of silver, and twelve thousand measures of rice (石 *shih*, 133 lbs). Tartar kings, who do not reside at court, are allowed two thousand five hundred taels, and forty pieces of silk. A princess has only four hundred taels, unless she be married to a foreign prince at a distance from Peking, and then her allowance is increased to a thousand. The emoluments allowed by the crown to the governor of Peking are fifteen thousand taels; to the treasurer nine thousand, and to the judge one thousand. Officers of government have both pay and allowances; and as an instance of the small nominal amount of salary, one of the highest rank in Peking may be adduced, which is only one hundred and eighty taels of silver, and one

* Each tael is about six shillings sterling.

hundred and eighty measures of rice annually. When this board has supplied the court, the civil service, the army, and the navy, with the necessary sums, it bestows rewards on the troops, and grants benevolences to those parts of the empire which have suffered from pestilence, famine, or any other calamity.

Part of the revenue derived from the land tax is left in the provinces to defray the expense of national sacrifices. The sums appropriated to individual deities are exceedingly small, almost contemptible, for such an empire as China: but the gods are very numerous, and the supreme government fixes the grant from an apprehension, that if no provision were made, the service would either be performed in a despicable manner, or become a source of oppression to the inhabitants of local districts; since sacrifices are offered to the genii of mountains, the demons of rivers, and the spirits of ancient worthies, not by any regular order of priesthood, but by the district magistrate, who superintends numerous temples dedicated to the divinities of the empire.* The founder of the Chinese monarchy is allowed twenty taels annually for sacrifice, with a small sum for incidental expenses. The temple dedicated to the patron saint of silk culture is allowed one hundred and thirty-three; the god of the civilians, forty-five, and of the military, only sixteen taels annually; but since there are temples in every district,† the expense amounts to something considerable throughout China. These sacrifices are offered in the spring and autumn, when deputies are sent from the capital to the native places of officers who

* The temples in China dedicated to Confucius alone are numbered at 1,560.

† Houses dedicated to idols in Canton province only, amount to 1,327.

fell in the wars with the Meaou-tsze, for the purpose of sacrificing to their manes on altars erected at the public expense in commemoration of their valour. It is obvious from such a state of public affairs, that with the best intentions and the utmost care of the heads of the government, their inferiors in office cannot be prevented from exacting contributions from the people under various pretexts, but really for the sake of enriching themselves.

The *Board of Rites* corresponds in the number and rank of its officers to the Board of Revenue. To persons not conversant with the etiquette of the East, for which China stands pre-eminent among the nations, the numerous volumes occupied in describing the duties of this board would be a matter of surprise. Court etiquette is most minutely explained in the authority under consultation. The rites and ceremonies peculiar to the coronation of an emperor, the enthronement of an empress, the creation of nobles, the elevation of ladies of the palace to superior rank, and the etiquette to be observed when the sovereign goes in state on a campaign, on a tour of pleasure into Tartary and the southern provinces of China, and even when he compliments her imperial majesty by a visit to her apartments on festive occasions, are all most minutely detailed.

On all occasions of public ceremony connected with the state, the Board of Rites determines the insignia of official rank appropriate to each department, and the persons by whom they are to be worn. The ceremonial observances of a coronation are numerous and imposing, from the religious and civil rites blended together, in sacrifices offered to the heavens, to imperial progenitors, and to the gods of the land and grain, by his majesty in

person the evening prior to the solemnity; from the numerous topical deities whose favour he invokes, the variety of omens examined in divination, according to immemorial custom, and the multitude of astrological signs consulted by soothsayers of different orders. The acts and movements of every official personage, with the precise number of prostrations, kneelings, reverences, bowings, and other gestures, the quarter of the heavens towards which they are to be directed, the doors of the different halls through which the procession is to pass, and the proper position of individuals relative to the throne and the incense altar near which they stand, according to their rank and the nature of the solemnity, are described with the greatest minuteness.

There are laws of etiquette applicable to kings of the imperial blood, and ordinary kings, who on receiving favours are commanded to return thanks on the monthly court day, some of whom are admitted within the "great pure gate" to perform the ceremony, while others are obliged to perform it outside. From those who receive promotion, the homage required is three times kneeling and nine times striking the forehead on the ground; those who are presented with apparel by his majesty must kneel twice and strike the forehead six times; but if the imperial gifts consist only of food, once kneeling and thrice striking the head is sufficient. Foreign ambassadors, when admitted to an imperial audience, as well as Tartar kings to whom the above laws apply, must at a given signal perform the ceremony three times repeated, of three kneelings and nine prostrations, during which the music is playing to the tune of *lung-ping*, "a splendid humiliation."

These degrading observances are equally required from ambassadors of the first potentates in Europe, and the envoys of their majesties of Corea, Cochin China, Tonking, Siam, the Loo-choo islands, and every little dependency in or near the Chinese sea, to whom injunctions are peremptorily addressed on any supposed ground of offence. Articles of *tribute* brought by foreign ambassadors are carefully specified, together with the donations bestowed by his imperial majesty on their sovereigns in return. The pope, designated in Chinese, "The king of renovating instruction," is honoured in the records of this board, with notice of the tribute he sent to China from a nation of the western ocean; to whom in return Yung-ching sent silk, jinseng, lackered ware, fine tea, paper, ink, and fans, and promised, in consequence, he said, of the patronage his father, Kang-he, granted to them, to protect all the pope's subjects in China so long as they obeyed the laws. From this circumstance, the difficulty of inculcating successfully the grand principles of toleration, though great, would appear not to be insurmountable. The mind of such an emperor as Kang-he, compared with that of Taou Kwang,* was, it is true, of very different structure and capacity, and the little light of Christianity and science once shed by the Romish missionaries on the court of Peking is now extinguished; still to infuse great and generous principles into the mind of the despot of so many millions is an object worthy of the most vigorous and costly efforts. Whether any approximation to such a result will arise from the present discussions between the British and Chinese governments is uncertain; undoubtedly both

* The present ruler of China.—See his portrait at the beginning of this work.

nations would profit much from cordial interchanges of reciprocal confidence. In addition to these state ceremonies, regulations are carefully prescribed for the observance of suitable etiquette between equals as well as superiors and inferiors, whether in private or public stations.

In the laws of the Tartar dynasty, from which the preceding statements are drawn, there are various usages to be observed by ladies of rank when they are elevated to the dignity of members of the imperial harem, invested with the honour of nobility, act as ladies in waiting on grand presentation days, and assist in performing the required ceremonies at the enthroning of the empress. The following detail of usages observed when female majesty ascends the throne, though rather diffuse, may be excused, perhaps, from its novelty to Europeans. It is translated from the authority just cited. "The imperial great empress, the evening before she is enthroned, commands the great officers of state to announce with all solemnity, in the ancestral temple and contiguous palaces, the precise time of the ceremony. Her carriages of state being in attendance, and musical instruments suspended before and within the doors of the palace, her majesty arrayed in royal apparel ascends her imperial chariot, and, preceded by the great ministers of the introductory ceremonies, proceeds with bands of music to the palace of compassion and tranquillity, where she reposes for a short time. A temporary throne having been erected for the emperor in the centre of the gateway of this palace, the officers of the Board of Ceremonies reverentially conduct his majesty from his own apartments, through the glorious imperial gateway, to the left side of the gate of eternal felicity, where he descends from his chariot and walks to

the door of tenderness and compassion, on the east of which he stands; meanwhile the officers go to the inner palace and request the empress to ascend her throne. Music is playing during the passage of her majesty from the hall to the presence chamber, which ceases on her ascending the throne. Ministers of state reverentially conduct his majesty to the centre of the prepared throne, where he stands. A special officer (the usher of the whip) arranges the great ministers of state, the body guard, and the court equipages, in due order, when the herald proclaims aloud the words—'kneel—worship—rise'—music instantly strikes up on the vermilion steps, his majesty, and all the great ministers of state, kneel thrice and bow nine times; when this ceremony is concluded his majesty is reverentially conducted to his own prepared throne.

"After the empress has been attended with music to her palace, his majesty ascends his chariot and returns to his palace. The lady mandarins, conductors of affairs, having erected a throne in front of her majesty's palace of tenderness and repose, and arranged in order, the honourable ladies, ladies, and ladies in waiting, on its right and left, the officers of this board go to the harem and respectfully desire the imperial and noble concubines and other ladies to proceed to her majesty's palace in their court robes, to perform the ceremony. Eight ladies duly invested with authority—'commissioned married ladies'—reverentially lead the *cortége* through the gate of felicity to the left gate of the palace of excellent melody, where they alight from their chariots, and walk to join the ladies already waiting to receive them. The ladies, directors of the ceremonies, return to the inner palace to request the imperial, great queen to ascend her throne. Her majesty complies,

and bands of music attend her progress. She ascends her throne: all is silent. The same official ladies then conduct the imperial queen to the centre of the place of ceremony, where the noble, right honourable, and honourable, concubines are arranged, on either hand behind her, with their faces towards the north. Music strikes up on the vermilion steps; the two great ministers of state, and the commissioned married ladies, respectfully solicit the empress at the head of the ladies of her apartments to perform the six reverences, the three kneelings, and the three worshippings. When these ceremonies are ended, they enter the palace of tenderness and tranquillity, where an imperial banquet is conferred, for which the royal guests return thanks by making two reverences and one bow. The empress and her ladies having been conducted to their apartments, with the same order and etiquette in which they came, all retire."

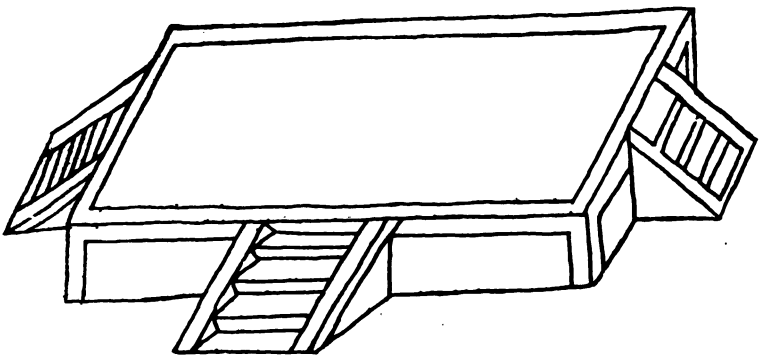
The literal signification of some of the preceding official names and acts of obeisance is curious: "there is the calling aloud and commanding officer, who acts the herald's part, the officer who grasps affairs,"—a title applicable to either sex, which takes the management of important matters of business; the officer of the whip, which perhaps answers to the page in waiting; the conductors of ceremonies and other officers, both male and female, corresponding to the masters of ceremonies, mistresses of the robes, and other officials in European courts; then there are the curtseyings, kneelings, and bowings of the ladies, with the kneelings, prostrations, and head knockings of the gentlemen.

Some matters which seem to belong to the war department, are under the direction of this board, such as the

best mode of conducting an attack or defence, punishments to be inflicted on a breach of military discipline, admonitions prepared in the name of the sovereign, to be addressed to his troops before going into battle, the deportment proper to be observed towards the vanquished, together with a list of military appointments, are inscribed among the records of this board. Miraculous supplies of water, and abundance of herbage in an arid desert, where the imperial army must otherwise have soon perished, are recorded as special interpositions of Heaven, resulting from the meritorious conduct of the generals, and the felicity of the dynasty under whose auspices they fight. Orders promulgated to the troops before they attack an enemy, are distinguished by a spirit of clemency but little observed by the soldiers, who are probably aware that the neglect of them will not be followed by certain punishment. Still decapitation is threatened to those who, on a march, rob, burn houses, maltreat the people, or in anywise injure their persons and property. Several other offences are punishable with death; as refusing to obey the signal for advancing or retiring, shrinking in actual conflict with the enemy, and discouraging others in the moment of action. An aid-de-camp or other officer, who falsifies the instructions of his general, reveals secret orders, attempts to rob another of his military fame, makes pretences of visions, dreams, ghosts, or supernatural omens of any kind, to influence the people, shall be beheaded.

But as this board superintends the national sacrifices, which are accounted of great importance by the government, an outline must be given of the ceremonies observed in offering them.

The objects of worship, the nature of the sacrifices, the



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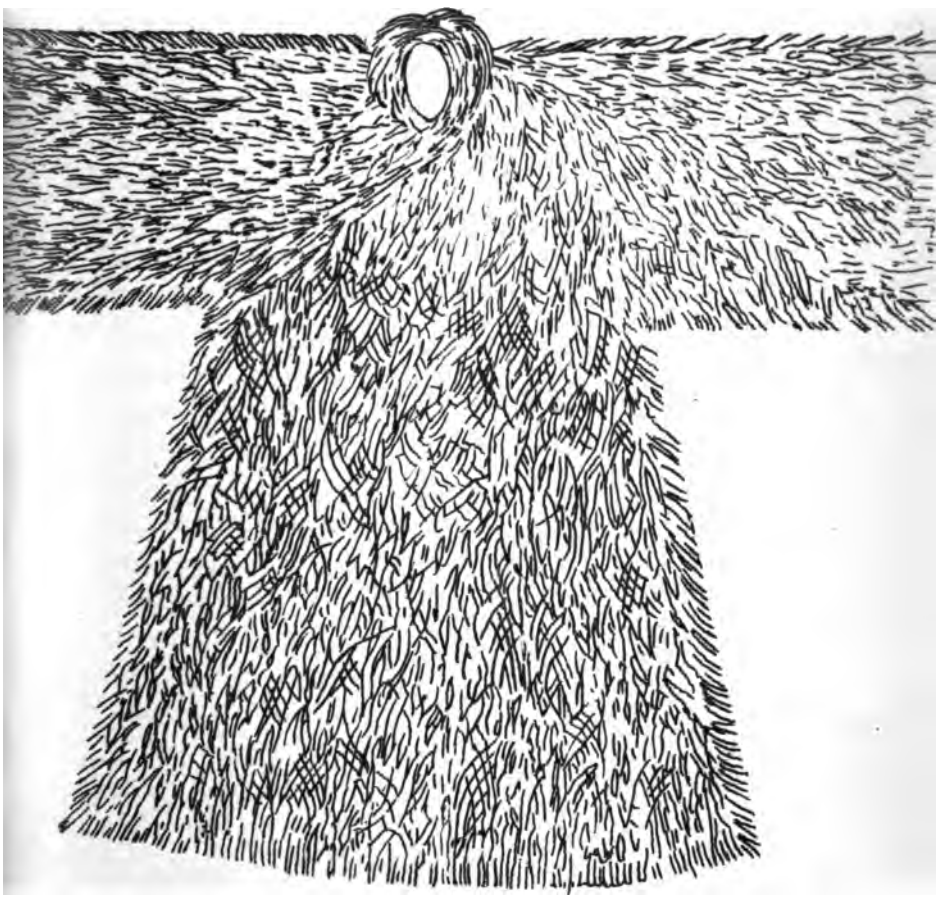

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persons who officiate, and the seasons when these rites should be solemnized, are described in detail. It would be difficult to assign a probable æra for the introduction of national sacrifices into China, whose historical records affirm that, in high antiquity, bullocks and sheep were offered undressed, because fire was unknown when the rite was first observed. The essential part of the ceremonial has ever consisted in sacrificing the life of a perfect animal; the slaying of which in due form is an object of solicitude, even at this day, with the emperor, who occasionally goes in person to inspect the sacred depository of victims and utensils, and to see the altar prior to the ceremony. It is usual, previous to the sacrifice, for a period of fasting to be observed by the civilians who officiate as priests, some of whom spend the whole preceding night in different public offices. But whatever semblance of devotion may be assumed during the performance of the ceremonies, the supreme direction of them by his majesty, and the public servants of the crown, sufficiently attests their political character. The numerous gods and goddesses of China are patronized by the government only for the purpose of producing, on the part of the people, abject submission to its despotic power. To preserve, in its integrity, the mighty influence of civil tyranny, based on superstitious fears and hopes, whatever is attractive in language, imposing in external splendour, and venerable from ancient usage, is resorted to in the solemnization of the national rites. Music is indispensable to the right performance of the sacrificial ceremonies, inasmuch as it is the ancient source of man's sublimest feelings. Aiming at the two-fold object of penetrating the people with awe, and exhibiting a perfect model of self-

devotion, the emperor not only sacrifices in person, but observes the most rigid forms of worship. The victim must be killed two days previously, and offered early in the morning, when his majesty reads a written form of prayer, announcing his motives, his proceedings, the objects he purposes to himself, and the happiness he anticipates from the event he is then commemorating, whether it be a victory over foreign foes, or the blessings of a civil rite. Rectitude of personal conduct, tranquillity to the empire, a long and felicitous reign, distinguished by pure benevolence, are the chief topics of the sovereign's prayers, which always conclude with a petition for the eternal repose of the dynasty. The formula of the ceremonial consists of kneelings and prostrations; its eucharistic oblations, of gems, silk, diamonds, and other costly articles, placed on the altar, first by his majesty, and then by his attendant ministers, who all bring offerings suitable to their rank and station. Such are the principal sacrifices offered to heaven. It is curious also to observe, in connection with what may be called the natural religion of China, sacrifices slain in spring and autumn, to the spirits of all preceding emperors and founders of dynasties, at the places where they are interred, first commemorating in one general service all that have ever lived, and then sacrificing to each individual separately, from the originator of the first, to the founder of the last dynasty. In execution of the latter ceremony official persons are sent by government to the different places of royal sepulture, near which it is supposed the shades of the departed constantly dwell, to present bullocks, sheep, pigs, fruit, incense, candles, silk, and libations of wine, with all possible veneration at all the tombs of the ancient worthies,

but with diminished respect to those of the sovereigns of Ming.*

In addition to these rites, others are prepared under the superintendence of this board for the service of deities without number: gods of the heavenly department—clouds, wind, thunder, and rain; of the earthly—mountains, rivers, seas, and hills; and of the four seasons, to which costly sacrifices are offered in time of great drought, from their vast influence over the physical condition of the empire; nay, even the very elements of which the air is formed, the constituent parts of the earth, and the productions of human art, are revered as gods. On the imperial army going out to fight, sacrifices are offered, not merely to the superior deities of the state, but to the gods of the road, fire, the imperial standards, cannon, and military weapons in general, during an uproarious confusion of noises from horns, gongs, and trumpets, the military officers officiating as priests; so that the principal parties in the state engaged in the great national sacrifices are the board of rites, as the authority for the ceremonial; the astronomical board to fix the proper season; the collegiate institute to compose the devotional exercises; and the great civil or military officers, as the case may require, to discharge the duties of the executive department. When thanks are to be returned for any great victory, an altar is erected in the open air by the emperor, who, having placed incense upon it, kneels thrice and bows nine times, in token of the obligations incurred to the azure heavens which he worships. It is the province of this board not only to decide upon the different ceremonies to be performed at the innumerable oblations

* The dynasty which the present family destroyed.

made throughout the empire, but to take cognizance of the two grand moral sections, into which the private rites of the people are divided by philosophers; these are the *felicitous* and the *calamitous* rites—terms which embrace all possible occasions of joy or sorrow, and their correspondent external duties, of which marriage ceremonies and funeral rites stand at the head of each class. If the object of the ceremony be to procure blessings, the astronomical board selects a propitious day, and the Han-lin college prepares a form of prayer, all the parties engaged previously keeping a strict fast.

Most minute regulations are enjoined respecting the shape, material, and colour of the dresses worn by members of the imperial family, and by the court generally. The minutiæ of the ceremonials prescribed are too tedious to be translated at length; suffice it to say, that the number of attendants on each personage, the various articles of luxury, and in ordinary use, for the tables and wardrobes of ladies and gentlemen, are in each individual case carefully ordained, and regulated with the utmost precision, whether they respect members of the royal house or their noble attendants.

The Military Board possesses a jurisdiction much more extensive than the import of its title, since it includes under its authority the naval and merchant service, the imperial hunting, police, and post-office departments, as well as the army. In this latter branch it takes cognizance of the appointment and removal of officers, the furnishing of supplies to the soldiers, and their general preparation for the field. China, according to its historians, maintains a large standing army, not much fewer than eight hundred thousand men, with a corresponding

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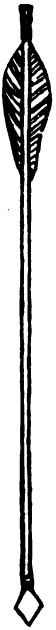
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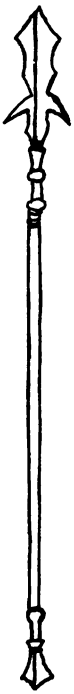
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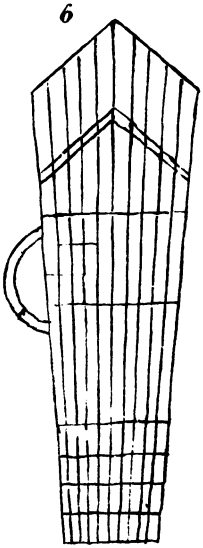
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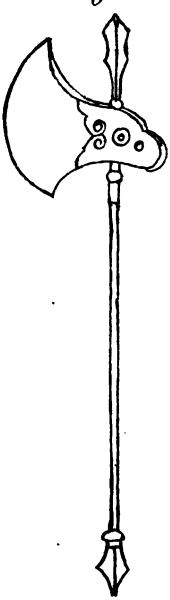
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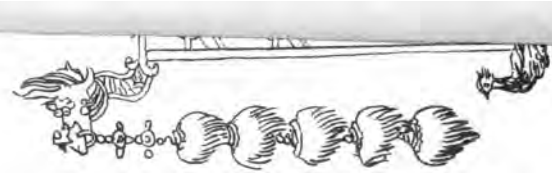
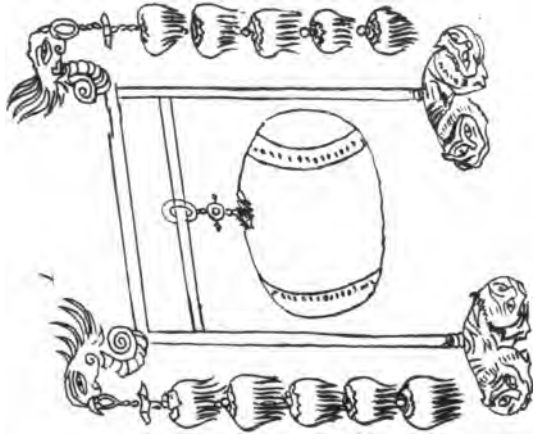
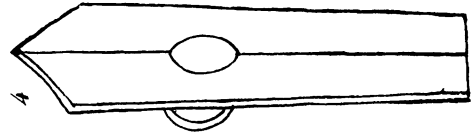
number of officers, of whom all the higher grades, and a large number of the soldiers, are Tartars. The arrangement of an army in the field, with two wings and a centre, in eight squares, like the men on the chess board, is a favourite mode, with Chinese writers, of describing the military tactics of the empire. To each of these battalions a standard is attached, with numerous officers of different rank, from a general, with majors, lieutenants, and adjutants-general, through the several descending series of colonels, majors, captains of thousands, heads of hundreds, to the lowest subaltern. All the military officers should rise from the ranks. There is, however, little discipline to improve the skill and aid the prowess of the privates, whose success in fighting has probably in all instances sprung from their own overwhelming numbers, or the pusillanimity of the enemy. Nor can a better state of discipline be expected while the larger proportion of the army is employed several months of the year in cultivating the soil for its support. Their chief use is to quell local insurrections; and that their conduct is sufficiently oppressive in the districts where they reside, or through which they are passing on duty, may be learned from the severe laws enacted by government, and the power it grants to their officers of inflicting summary punishment on those who rob, maltreat, or destroy peaceable subjects.

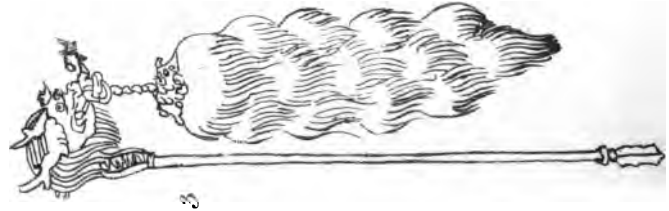
The Tartars are much more warlike than the Chinese, who, an imperial historian says, before fire-arms were introduced, with no other weapon than the sword and the bow, always routed their adversaries; but their matchlocks and larger guns, in the manner they are usually served, would, notwithstanding their numbers, prove a

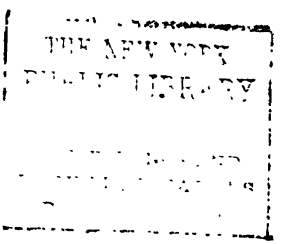
feeble resistance to the precision and rapidity of European gunnery. It is unfortunate for the Chinese that they have been so isolated as to form a world of themselves, from which all other nations are excluded, and in whose improvement they have, consequently, not participated. The entire correction of their supercilious conduct towards foreigners will, probably, cost them a considerable sacrifice of blood and treasure. Stratagems in war are greatly admired by native writers, who in some of their histories describe the feats performed by the commanders of both armies. The satisfaction of knowing how they formerly attacked their adversaries, defended themselves in the field, and conducted sieges, is considerably abated by the frequent recurrence, in avowedly official accounts, of stories too absurd for belief; generally, such as relate to divination, and supernatural interpositions, from which it is pretended to derive foreknowledge of events, and intuitive discernment of character. Astrology is a favourite science with military commanders, whose abode in the open air during a campaign might suggest the advantage to be taken of the movements of the planets, for the purpose of overawing a superstitious army. Kung-ming, a general in the civil wars of the third century, was greatly celebrated for his skill in applying the astrological art to military movements. Being consulted by his prince, who was in difficulty, on the desirableness of some new enterprise, he remarked—"During this splendid night, looking at the figures of the stars, I beheld in the north-west one star fall to the earth, which phenomenon must betoken the rending asunder of an imperial clan." Scarcely had he uttered these words when a messenger arrived to announce that the eldest son of the royal house had











sickened and perished. Kung-ming, who was the Calchas* of the army, goes into battle, with a fan in one hand and a handkerchief in the other, to decide the fate of millions by the motion of his hand. Ambuscades, to which recourse is constantly had, when successfully laid, indicate the accomplished general. They consist in attacking the enemy with an inferior number of troops, who, by feigning to be routed, flee, and draw their opponents after them into a place where the ambuscade lies concealed, which immediately rushes out to join their comrades, and attack the pursuing party. The soldier, the marine, the policeman, and the sailor, are all blended, by the constitution of this board, in one individual. The estimates of the army include those of the navy, and men are soldiers or sailors, admirals or generals, as the state may require their services on land or water. This board provides for the coast and river service, superintends the construction of vessels of all kinds, and ordains their models and admeasurements, from which no deviation is allowed, lest they should outsail the government cruizers; their rigging, and even fitting out, are objects of careful attention. It enforces numerous minute and vexatious prohibitions. Natives are strictly enjoined not to embark in foreign ships; and foreigners peremptorily forbidden to enter the country on pain of severe punishment, whether on their own responsibility, or as slaves purchased by the Chinese themselves.

This board takes charge of the materials of which gunpowder is made, especially sulphur and saltpetre, to prevent illicit traffic in those articles. It extends its authority over the police department, which is charged

* Virgil's Æneid, Bk. II. ver. 100.

with the suppression of piracy, the detection of murders, the apprehension of gamblers, and members of the triad society, which is an object of great jealousy to the government. For the aid of the civil power against such offenders, military patroles are appointed in every district of the empire, to a number not exceeding twenty, nor less than ten, in a locality, all of whom are severely punished for neglect of duty. The Chinese, not being favoured with a post-office, and facilities of railway, or mail coach transit, make up the deficiency by appointing couriers for the despatch of letters and official communications to different parts of the empire. In the metropolitan province there are nearly two hundred stations, at some of which there are more than that number of horses, with about half the number of men to take care of them. The number of postmen is upwards of ten thousand, for the purpose of carrying despatches to all parts of the empire: the entire establishment is conducted by this board.

The board of rites takes cognizance of imperial hunting excursions, which are always on a lucky day selected by the royal astronomer, and preceded by the usual sacrifices to the national deities, whose favour it is essential to propitiate. On such occasions the emperor receives petitions from his subjects generally, who, with his officers, salute him kneeling by the way-side. Imperial reviews are also under its direction, when, in Chinese phrase, his majesty girds his sword-belt to him, and mounts his charger, attended with official pomp and splendour.

The Board of Punishments. It has been already intimated that the general division of the laws corresponds to the number of tribunals now under review. The original digest of the laws of the empire, made by Seaou-ho

two centuries before the Christian æra, comprised four hundred and fifty statutes, to which sixteen hundred have since been added. The enactments for changing or modifying preceding laws in different ages, together with those founded on the will of the emperor, are chiefly embodied in the penal code, and in the collection of statutes of the Tartar dynasty. An excellent translation of the penal code having been made some years ago by Sir George Staunton, it would not be necessary to enter into the peculiar details of Chinese law even if the object of this work permitted. A general outline of the operations of this board, as they are described in the statutes of the Tartar dynasty, is all that we shall attempt. There are two presidents, a Tartar and a Chinese, with numerous other subordinate officers whose names and titles are stated in the opening of the treatise. The punishments are five, corresponding to the ancient elements of the earth. The first in order, is flogging with a flat piece of bamboo. For petty offences, divided into five classes, the law ordains from ten to fifty blows, which, however, to evince the merciful spirit of the government, are reduced in practice to four blows for the lowest, and twenty for the highest offence. Flogging with the larger piece of bamboo for more heinous offences, is from sixty to a hundred blows in theory, but reduced in practice from twenty to forty, which the punishment must not exceed; according to an ancient proverb, "be severe in enacting laws, but lenient in executing them." For crimes of a more aggravated nature the wooden collar is to be worn from one month to three, varying in weight according to the heinousness of the offence. It is a square piece of wood fastened round the neck with an iron clasp, which forms a punish-

ment so severe as sometimes to prove fatal. Its length is three cubits, its breadth two, its weight twenty-five catties —more than thirty pounds. The third class of punishments is transportation, the banishment of the offender from his native province, and is divided into five kinds. When the term is completed the offender may return to the place of registration—his native abode. A scale is adopted of proportioning the term of banishment to the number of blows; one year being equivalent to sixty, and a year and a half to seventy, advancing ten blows for each half-year for which transportation may be commuted. If the criminal abscond, on being taken he shall have two years added to his original punishment; if he be under the sentence of transportation to the distance of three thousand *le*, four years is the additional term. The fourth class of punishments is banishment to a distant province for life, which is divisible into three classes of distance, of two thousand, two thousand five hundred, and three thousand *le;* hence the phrase *san-lew*, so frequently met with, means these three grades of banishment for life regulated by distance from the culprit's home. Commutation for offences deserving transportation may be made by wearing the *kea*, or wooden collar, as a person to be banished a thousand *le* may be excused by wearing that instrument fifty days: this is peculiarly applicable to a standard-bearer—a Manchow Tartar—who, when guilty of other offences, has the privilege of being whipped, instead of beaten with the bamboo. The servant of a Tartar offending is to be sent to the army on the frontier to be a slave for life, which is a heavier punishment than ordinary transportation, and for the execution of which the criminal is placed exclusively among the Tartars; this

grade of retribution is divided into five branches. The fifth class of punishments is death by strangling and beheading, superintended by a special officer of the criminal department, who after the trial makes a report to the emperor, and obtains his authority to carry the sentence into execution. For heinous crimes the head is placed on a pole at the top of a cage and shown to the multitude. The death inflicted on parricides and traitors, by slowly cutting them to pieces, is the most cruel and ignominious; and it may be executed without regard to the regular time of the assizes: bribes are given to the executioner by the criminal to stab him previously to the process. Beheading is considered more shameful than strangling, from the veneration with which the Chinese regard the body, and from the circumstance of its being mutilated in the one case and not in the other; so that a Chinaman would greatly prefer the death of the vulgar to that of the peer. The mode of strangling is on a cross by twisting the cord tight round the feet, then the waist, the wrists, and finally the neck, to prolong the sufferings of the criminal: bribes are given to have it put first round the neck. In inflicting the ordinary punishments bribes to the lictor render the infliction much lighter.

The next topic in order in this work is the commutation of offences for money. For slight offences an atonement may be accepted, if the offender be above seventy years of age, and under fifteen, or of infirm health. An offence deserving transportation to the distance of three thousand *le*, and inferior crimes, including those of women who offend the laws, as brawlers, adulteresses, thieves, or disobedient, or have been accustomed to similar practices, may be commuted. If a preceptor of astronomy commit

an offence, he shall only be flogged. This is a singular law, since a clergyable offence is recognized not in favour of the priesthood but of a civil calling, and shows both the esteem in which astronomical calculations are held and the scarcity of mathematical talent. If homicide be committed or injury unintentionally inflicted, the punishment varies from beating to strangling, and may be commuted for money. Those who receive bribes shall not be allowed to commute their offences for money. Persons to be branded are, offenders who run away, thieves, contrivers of plots, those who resist the police, and murderers. Tartars are to be branded on the arm, the fore part of the wrist, and below the elbow; slaves are to be branded on the face. For transportable offences and those of a graver nature, the criminal is branded on the face; old offenders to be branded on the face below the hair, on the temples, and above the chin; runaway criminals are branded on the left side with the names of their crimes, and their native places on the right; the characters to be an inch and a half square, and the breadth of the writing two-fifths of an inch. As soon as the sentence is pronounced the branding takes place. Instruments of punishment and torture are minutely described, with the persons who are exempt from torture.

Law is expressed by two terms, which are defined to mean what fixes the crime and what aids in so doing; one of the terms denotes the standard laws of the empire; the other, the explanatory clauses or bye-laws. There are thirty sections divided into the following subjects: Celebrated enactments, official regulations, public precepts, domestic servants, the boundaries of fields, marriage, granaries, rules of study (the statutes which fix

them), debts, public markets, sacrifices, laws of etiquette, palace guards, government of the army, passes and fords, horse-keepers, post-office stations, thefts, human life, fightings and wranglings, intemperate language, litigations about property, bribery, falsehood adultery, miscellaneous offences, the pursuit of fugitives, decision of cases at law, public buildings, and the banks of rivers. The minute points into which they are subdivided amount to three hundred and forty-six, each according with its primary law, to subjugate animosities, to guard against official delinquency, to correct wickedness and folly, to illustrate customs, and promote obedience. Crimes are distinguished into public and private, trivial and important. Laws ordained to distinguish principal from subordinate offenders, and to regulate punishments, must be diffused throughout the empire and eternally obeyed. The ten unpardonable crimes are: plotting the subversion of the altar—the gods of the land and grain; the great rebellion—laying in ruins the temples of ancestors, imperial tombs, and palaces; treason—deserting one's native country to serve a foreign nation; the impious rebellion—wickedly seeking to imbrue the hands in the blood of a grandfather or grandmother, a parent, or collateral relative; violation of moral principle—to slay or maim a whole family—poison animals, and make them dream of monsters; sacrilegious impiety—to steal vessels used in sacrifice at the imperial temple, to steal imperial baggage, garments and other things belonging to the emperor, to counterfeit the imperial seal, to mix medicines for the emperor contrary to the original prescription, to prepare food contrary to the prohibitions, and make the emperor's visiting boats of slender construction; filial disobedience

—in cursing ancestral relations and parents, not supporting parents, not mourning for their death, contracting marriage during the period of mourning; disagreement amongst kindred—a wife accusing her husband to the magistrate, and superiors and inferiors committing crimes with one another; unrighteous deeds—the people killing magistrates, subordinate officers slaying their superiors; incestuous intercourse between members of the same family: these are the ten unpardonable crimes. There are eight classes of privileged persons exempt from torture in giving their evidence, and if guilty of offences they are to be reported direct to the emperor, all proceedings being stayed till his reply is received: these are members of the imperial family; ancient attendants on the emperor's person; men of great military renown, of high moral virtue, of extraordinary abilities either in the cabinet or the field, of great industry and zeal in the service of the state; persons of noble rank, and national guests, that is, descendants of a preceding dynasty.

Laws for the punishment of official delinquents, whose office entitles them to the privilege of the bastinado, are then noticed. The mode of conducting lawsuits follows. Pleading by barristers is not allowed in Chinese courts. The individual may make his own defence, with what assistance he has previously procured from the expositors of the law, and transcribers of documentary evidence, who, though disallowed by the statutes of the empire, yet profess to gain a cause for a certain sum of money. It is an almost incredible fact, that an innocent man is in some instances allowed by the laws of China to suffer death for the guilty. The law of the case, with regard to persons not related, is, that he who is bribed to become a sub-

stitute shall suffer the same punishment as the guilty party, whether it be transportation, strangling, or beheading; and that punishment, besides that of the original offence, shall be inflicted on the person who procures the substitute. If there be relationship between the parties, the law interposes less objection; especially if it be the younger for the older, as a late emperor remarked, that for a son to suffer death for his parent might be allowed without violating natural feelings, but for a father to die for his son, whose tender feelings might suggest such a step, the very thought of it could not be endured. It is enacted also, that posterity should suffer for the crimes of ancestors—perhaps one of the severest provisions of the Chinese law. It reminds the Scripture readers of the punishments threatened in the Jewish canon, to be visited unto the third and fourth generation. Foreigners who become naturalized in China, and experience the renovating influences of her government, are expected to submit to her laws; but the Mung-koo Tartars are tried by their own laws.

The Board of Works, is occupied in superintending the public buildings connected with the imperial palaces, gardens, temples, tombs, and the national altars. Every work of art, military or civil, required by the government is under its direction; such as bows, arrows, swords, cannon, matchlocks, standards, banners, and helmets. Helmets for a king must be made of iron washed with gold at the vertex, and adorned with a red gem and a coat of mail, whose exterior is of cotton studded with gold nails, and lined with white silk, between which are placed iron plates. The fortresses, public granaries, barracks, rivers, canals, bridges, and roads, together with junks and

packets, of the latter of which about two hundred and fifty are allowed for the province of Canton, are all superintended by this board. To preserve a communication with Thibet, bridges of boats are built, and on the lakes, near dangerous rapids, a class of life-boats have been stationed for more than a hundred years. Without entering more into detail than to state that her majesty's carriages, sedan chairs, boxes for jewels, and those in which petitions are to be presented at court, are made under the direction of this board, it will be allowed that its officers have sufficient objects to employ their constant attention, and, considering the capricious humours of their master, sufficient cause for the utmost solicitude in discharging their public duties.

The Board of Music, not included in the six boards, is instituted to direct the rejoicings and festivals at the palace. From the notice of the musical instruments, it will be seen that the Chinese do not excel in this department of the fine arts, and that noise, rather than delicate sounds, or harmonious combinations, constitutes their chief attraction. It will not, therefore, be necessary to detain the reader's attention on a discussion of their theories.

Chinese Nobility.—The different degrees of nobility in China originated under the latter part of the Shang dynasty, and were then three in number, in imitation of the "three glorious lights"—the sun, moon, and stars. The nobles of the Chow period, some hundred years later, were distinguished into five ranks—Kung, How, Pih, Tsze, Nan, in imitation of the five elements. The first of these is named Kung, "public spirited," from a generous regard

to the welfare of the state, in opposition to selfish feelings. The second, How, persons who have lost the favour of the court by their virtues, but expecting more auspicious times, persevere in doing good amidst suffering and obloquy; hence How means to wait, to expect. The third, Pih, were "splendid men," as the word denotes, men possessing a high degree of intelligence; superiors in age, wisdom, and virtue. The fourth, Tsze, nobles capable of nurturing and training others in virtuous conduct—a word applied now to philosophers and persons of eminent learning. The fifth, Nan, nobles able to sustain the burden of important offices with vigour, and thereby to give repose to others; the word signifies male, strength. In ancient times the nobles of China, as in the early history of most civilized countries, were inferior kings or chieftains, attached to a certain territory, over which they ruled despotically. The emperor, "son of heaven," commanded a domain a thousand *le* in extent; the first order of nobility possessed a territory of one hundred; the third seventy, and the two last orders fifty each, a district of about twelve English square miles. Those chieftains who could not command fifty *le* were not allowed to attach themselves to the emperor, but were united with the inferior nobles. It is said that China, which was then divided into nine regions, contained seventeen hundred and seventy nations. Other statements of the division of territory amongst ancient nobles, represent the land as being divided equally into parcels of five hundred *le* each: the first portion, nearest the imperial domain, denoted the highest rank, which regularly varied to the most distant portion, which was the lowest. These were designated dependent nations, or tributary provinces.

Choo How, a general term for ancient nobility, reigned over their states by hereditary right, but the statesmen did not enjoy their rank by hereditary succession. The patent of nobility was originally created to reward meritorious officers of government. The first universal monarch of China, who conquered six other contending states, instituted twenty degrees of nobility for this purpose; some of whom had rank but no territorial revenue, others had both. During the dynasty of Han, the third century of our æra, two degrees of nobility were created; the Wang or king (some have translated the word "duke"), and How or "noble," which are retained to the present period: the former was conferred on princes of the imperial family, and is equivalent to the title of the ancient nobles.

It was under this dynasty also that the practice first obtained of distributing the *people* as well as the land among persons of rank; anciently territory was given without vassals. Other titles of eminence were bestowed, and special admission to the imperial presence granted to those who bore them, together with a seat among his majesty's ministers. Inferior statesmen, created nobles by patent, were called *court nobles*, who wore embroidered garments, and flat caps, with a board shaped like a parallelogram; the designation implying "nobles waiting on sacrifice," from their attendance at the grand sacrifices of the empire. When the kings or dukes were created, they received a reed and some earth, with which they repaired to their destined territory to erect altars to the land. About the close of the sixth century, there were six degrees of titled nobility, Wang prefixed as the chief to the five already mentioned. At this period many distinctions existed

among the Chinese nobility, for the purpose of rewarding military merit; several of them were without emolument or revenue, and thence very significantly designated empty patents of nobility. The Tang dynasty, during the sixth century, acknowledged nine degrees of nobility, similar to those which afterwards prevailed: princes of the blood were styled "consanguineous kings." Under the Sung dynasty, about the tenth century, owing to the ease with which its founder obtained the empire, titles were not conferred for military merit, but for the sake of honouring literature, a practice directly the reverse of that of Han, which ennobled only those who had done military service.

The Ming dynasty, the last Chinese family that sat upon the throne, bestowed its honours principally on the princes and princesses of the imperial house.

The causes for creating nobility are arranged under several heads, in the following order. 1. The kindred of the emperor. 2. The meritorious servants of the crown. 3. The sons and grandsons of those who have died with honour in the imperial service. 4. The posterity of meritorious statesmen; a queen named Kaou-how, about two centuries before Christ, commanded certain temple honours to be continued age after age without ceasing, and that each of the individual's heirs should inherit his rank. 5. Those who have been eminent for virtuous conduct. 6. Nobility granted to honour former worthies, and prevent their names from becoming extinct. 7. Nobility conferred as a mere mark of the prince's gracious favour. 8. Nobility conferred on distant relations of female relatives of the royal house. 9. Posthumous nobility, or that conferred after the death of the person to be ennobled; promotions which have often been the occasion of idolatry

to the Chinese, since they worship deified mortals, to whom, because their exploits had been held in veneration, mortal emperors have rendered immortal and divine honours. 10. Transferring, or rather changing titles, equivalent to our mode of promotion. 11. Nobility granted to persons in foreign territories, who have submitted, and become attached to China. 12. Nobility granted to females! yes, notwithstanding the harsh bearing of celestial usages on the fair sex, there is sufficient gallantry in China to induce her sons occasionally to court its good opinion. Nobility was also granted to the common people about two centuries before the Christian æra, as an inducement to them to put away the altars of Tsin, and establish in their stead those of the Han dynasty. The titles were sold, or bestowed gratis, according to circumstances, and each of the loyalists who had rank, obtained the forgiveness of any crimes he might commit. There were some who humbly declined being ennobled, of whom honourable mention is made in the native work from which these extracts are made.

SECTION VI.

SUPERNATURAL ANIMALS—ANTIQUITIES—SACRED AND SOCIAL CUSTOMS —CIVIL AND POLITICAL INSIGNIA—INTERCOURSE WITH DISEMBODIED SPIRITS—SUPERSTITIOUS PREJUDICES—PERIODICAL FEASTS—DIVINATION—MARRIAGE.

MAN, composed of matter organised like the bodies of the inferior animals, and of spirit capable of operations inconceivably superior, though variously affected by different circumstances, never loses the identity of his species, nor fails to evince its immeasurable superiority to every other. Guided by reason in the absence of revelation, if we except the more savage tribes, his modes of action conform to certain symbols of authority befitting his two-fold nature, whether he be the member of a patriarchal community or the subject of an extensive empire. Emblems and devices, common to tribes between whom no intercourse ever subsisted, strikingly illustrate these different characteristics of humanity, by embodying supernatural protection in figures of living animals, human beings, or supposed spiritual existences. These symbols of popular superstition vary in nations which have the same object in view, according to the functions and sentiments they are designed to portray.

The pure child of nature, whose habits of life almost identify him with the beasts of the forest, has a spiritual

directory, more simple indeed, but not more debased than the superstitions of the lettered Pagan, whose traditional customs, derived from a remote ancestry, hold him in the grossest thraldom. In the barbarous state, the imaginative faculty, excited by surrounding objects, passing events, and the extraordinary phenomena of the heavens, is the source of hopes and fears unaided by traditional communications, which, so far as religious principle is involved, are perhaps confined to the more polished heathen. Both barbarous and civilized pagans, however, agree to recognize certain animals as national protectors, on whose agency they rely to reveal the counsels of the Supreme Being respecting futurity. The most probable origin of this superstitious practice is an obscure tradition of patriarchal sacrifices. For whatever regard be had, to the viscera of victims slain for the purposes of prognostication, to prodigies in the heavens, to the appearance of rare animals on the earth, and to extraordinary events of Divine Providence, still it is only as omens to indicate the irreversible decree of one Supreme Power. The transition from this state of feeling to idolatry, and the transformation of the mere instrument into the protecting national deity, will not appear unnatural, if we consider the close connection that has always subsisted between civil government and superstition; and, in the purer ages of the world, between divine and human authority. Hence animals, viewed both as emblems of political power, and as supernatural tokens of the will of Heaven, became gradually transformed from unconscious agents into independent deities. The Egyptians, having deified living animals and inanimate natural productions, tortured their imaginations to invent new deities, by uniting different members of

different species of animals into monstrous figures as objects of worship.

The theories of the Chinese, whatever be their practice, are almost equally gross. In a work devoted to this subject there are descriptions, accompanied with drawings of various monsters, revered as the deities of certain mountains and hills where they dwell, to control the events and unfold the destinies of human life. Their existence is said to have originated from the fortuitous intercourse of superhuman beings in mountains and forests. Their transmission to posterity is ascribed to the divine Yu,* who during his reign caused figures of tributary offerings from distant provinces to be engraven on wine cups, sacred vessels, and vases, for the instruction of his people in the knowledge of remote customs and manners. These wonders of mountains and rivers, of herbs and trees, of birds and beasts, were first preserved as memorials of natural phenomena by Yu, who "illustrated their habits, discriminated their natures, and classified their species;" but were afterwards regarded as divinities, which the writer says, "are represented one by one, whether frightful to the eye, or alarming to the ear, and whether existing constantly, but seldom, or not at all. This method of instruction by symbolic forms," it is added, "was not confined to one monarch, but was adopted by all who sought to illumine the minds of their people." Not only is the precise residence of each monster recorded, but the quantity of gold, silver, and diamonds, found in the several rivers and hills to which it is contiguous. It would be uninteresting to describe all the strange forms which a wild and superstitious imagination has conceived; the following

* See p. 132.

specimens will exhibit their general character. An animal with the body of a tiger, having nine human heads, one of which is in the centre of the other eight, called the intelligent creature of a hundred souls; a species of crocodile, said to exist in the Yang-tsze-keang, which has six heads and four feet; a kind of deer with the body of a horse, spotted like a tiger, having a white head and red tail, which makes a noise like a person singing; fishes, serpents, and other animals, headless, or having many heads of different species, with one limb, one eye, or destitute of both, or having several eyes, limbs, feet, tails, and wings, annexed to one body, constitute the more exaggerated symbols of deities. Of single animals celebrated in natural, as well as superstitious history, and of less complicated forms, the *sing-sing*, of the baboon or monkey tribe, occupies a prominent position: it is described variously, with a human face, the head of a fowl, the body of a dog or pig, as knowing persons' names, and crying like an infant; there is also the rhinoceros, which has the figure of a buffalo, the head of a dog, and three horns, one on its nose, one on the forehead, and one on the top of the head; and the unicorn, which has the figure of an ox, is of a blueish black colour, and possessed of one horn rising perpendicularly from the top of its head. But a large proportion of these alleged monsters are connected with some calamity, whose appearance is considered a presage of its occurrence. Serpents of all sizes, and fishes with human heads, are generally omens of long drought; bullocks, buffaloes, and large animals forbode extensive inundations or great pestilence; a species of fox predicts, by his appearance, many eminent scholars; a dog prognosticates a great army; *a man with three faces is an emblem of immortality.* Of

local deities, the god of the southern mountain stands erect with the feet of a fowl, the face of a man, two wings and two horns, while the god of the southern rivers and streams appears with his legs enveloped in the folds of a serpent; but such superstitious notions, though recorded in their ancient books, have comparatively little influence on the practical character of the Chinese.

The four supernatural animals that preside over the destinies of the Chinese empire, are the stag, the phœnix, the tortoise, and the dragon, which may be designated the guardians of literature, virtue, superstition, and national authority; since the first appears at the birth of sages, in token of Heaven's approbation; the second only in seasons of universal virtue; the third is appropriated to divination; the fourth is the national arms of China, depicted on the imperial standards, and affixed to imperial precepts, edicts, documents, books, instruments, and all the insignia of royalty.

Closely allied to the preceding topic, are the antiquities of China, deposited in ancestral temples, consisting of sceptres, vases, goblets, tripods, cups, bells, girdles, rings, and caps, which were first reduced to classes by command of the emperor Yaou, who spared no expense to complete the collection, which succeeding emperors ordered to be published by the presidents of Han-lin college, and of the Board of Ceremonies, with other superior officers of state. Their professed object was the promotion of public virtue, which, according to Chinese notions, is attainable only by the study of ancient memorials. For when the people of Tsoo declared they neither had, nor desired to have, any other valuables but virtue alone, it was replied, "for that very reason they should rejoice to examine inscriptions

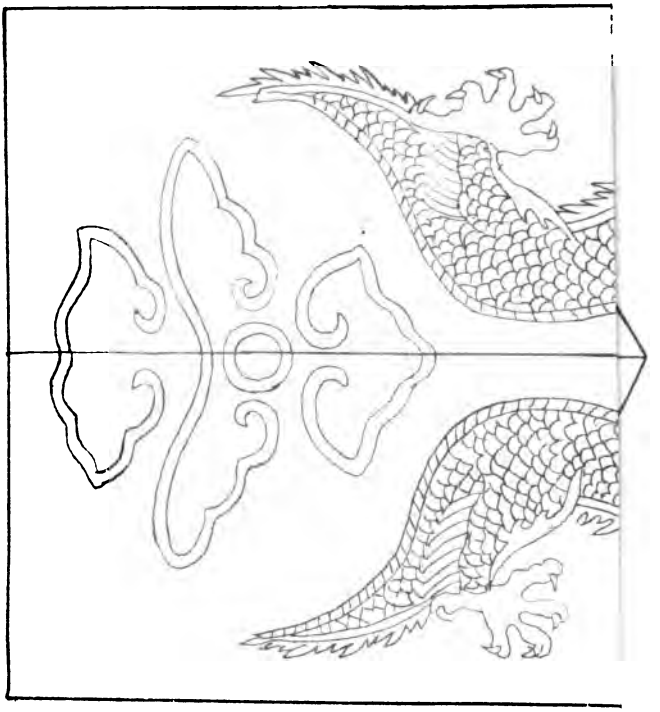
on vessels preserved in the halls of their forefathers expressly for their instruction. Good men of old compared virtue to a diamond embedded in mud but not defiled, uninjured by constant attrition, bright in surrounding darkness, smooth but impenetrable."

Sceptres, the most ancient symbols of authority, were originally made of some rude material dug from the earth;* but were in later periods set with gems, or made of the chrysopras, and other precious stones. In the preface to the work I am consulting, it is stated—"From the three dynasties† to the present time, sceptres and other insignia were made of valuable stones, cut and polished, and were borne by all official personages, from his majesty to the district officer; not, however, for their value, but as ensigns of authority; either on state occasions by the emperor or when his nobles went to court to pay their dutiful homage, some of which were held in both hands before the face while in his majesty's presence; or by princes and governors, who carried them in their hands, to show that they were invested with office by their sovereign. But while all had the same official character, they varied in form and size‡ according to the dynasty to which they belonged, and the special idea they were intended to symbolize. The sceptre used at the Deluge‖ seems to have combined the properties of an official token and a mystic symbol. "On it, embroidered in splendid colours," says my author, "were two ancient seal characters, whose meaning is unknown. During the reign of Seuen-Ho, a vessel with three feet was found with the same two

* 土 *earth*, repeated 圭 forms sceptre.

† *Hea*, B.C. 2000; *Yin*, B.C. 1200; *Chow*, B.C. 1000.

‡ See Plates Nos. 1, 2. ‖ See Plate No. 3.



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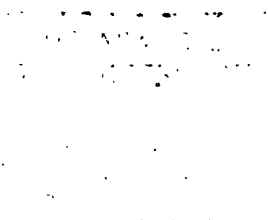

symbols engraven upon it, in a river at Tse-nan, the capital of Shan-tung; whence, as ancient sages and princes who had performed any meritorious service must present an offering to the Supreme Ruler, like the sacrifices on altars of earth,* erected to topical deities, so there must have been, after the victims were offered, sacred things, such as metal vessels and carved stones, buried in the earth, or sunk in the waters; and as the vessel found in the river bore the same symbols as the sceptre, it is natural to conclude they were both thrown into the river together. The sceptre having been found in an imperial district during the Tang dynasty, the words 'Kae-yuen's imperial district,' are engraven on the reverse side." Other national emblems are designed to preserve historical recollections. The sceptre of the royal sacrifices of the Chow dynasty relates to the worship of antiquity; the sceptre bearing figures of the silkworm, and of grain, suggests the original sources of public wealth: ensigns armorial, adapted to the different orders of nobility, indicate personal rank; the auspicious signet, on which the Pa-kwa are drawn, recals to the mind the origin of the universe. Still there was a sacred or superstitious sentiment involved in the official token. According to an ancient ode, "the queen, attended by the ladies of her palace, and bearing the silkworm sceptre in her hand, proceeded on an auspicious day in the middle of spring to the weaving apartment to invoke blessings on the silkworm;" doubtless in imitation of the ancient queen,† who is said to have originated the nurture of it. The sceptre of grain was borne by the emperor to the usual place of

* See Plate No. 4.

† Yuen-fei, the wife of Hwang-te: B.C. 2330.

sacrifice outside the city, where, on the first day of the second month of spring, as high priest of the empire, and the special patron of agriculture, he prayed to the Supreme Ruler for a blessing on grain.

Vessels used in performing the rites of sacrifice, and on public occasions, civil or ceremonial, solemn or festive, were preserved with great care and veneration in the temple of ancestors: they were variously designated according to the æra of their invention, their particular shape, or their special use. Some bore symbolical inscriptions, others the figures of monstrous deities; but the more ancient were of the simplest construction, destitute alike of ornament and writing, and were probably in use before the invention of letters.

The generic term for the whole class, which also designates a particular kind, is now appropriated to signify the invariable principle of rectitude implanted by Heaven in the mind of man. Abstract significations are also attached to specific names; as "nobility" to the name of a vessel with three feet, from which libations of wine were poured during the rites of sacrifice. It was rung on festive occasions to caution the guests to avoid intoxication, by persons specially appointed for this purpose. The name of an upright vessel with two handles, by which it is presented to a superior, has originated the term for honour and respect. The "victim vessel," adorned with representations of the clouds on its surface, was most probably used at the principal national sacrifices, since its name denotes victims offered in sacrifice, which must be without blemish. Several of this class are named after the different animals, to which their shape is made conformable; as the elephant, chosen not only for its size, but for its

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proboscis, which was the part of the body first formed,* and employed to take up its means of sustenance. There is also the duck vessel, shaped like the duck, because it swims skilfully on the water without being immersed, and thereby warns persons against drinking wine to excess: it is made in conformity with the ritual of the great national festival. Various other devices were adopted to preserve sobriety; as thunder clouds depicted on the surface of the vessel, to intimate the terrible effects of intoxication. Some vessels were made to perpetuate a remembrance of the ancient simplicity of manners; as the gourd-cup, in imitation of the gourd or calabash, from which wine was drunk before the manufactured cup was known. Others are associated with extraordinary legends, which have been preserved with the reverential credulity always attendant on remote usages handed down by superstitious ignorance; as the "peach cup," made to resemble the stone of a famous peach tree, the emblem of long life, which blossoms once in three thousand years, and three thousand years afterwards bears fruit: the globular part of the cup is finely ornamented, to represent cloudy vapour; on one side of which are engraven ten characters of the cycle, which signify thirty-seven years, twenty-one months, and thirty-four days; on the other, the correspondent sentence is, "The Royal Mother of the West bestowed the immortal peach in the palace of Seuen-Ho;" according to the legendary tale that the emperor (Woo-te) built an elevated terrace of mud to penetrate heaven, on which the royal mother, who had eaten of the fruit of the tree, descended, during seven days

* The Chinese consider the nose of every animal to be the part of the fœtus first formed in the womb.

and seven nights, to discuss with him the principles of reason. A round basket for containing grain used in sacrifice is susceptible of a moral interpretation; since to say to a person,—"there is a part of the basket not polished," expresses delicately some defect in his conduct. The superstitious notions, that good or bad fortune was attached to several of the vessels, might arise from their consecration to religious uses, whilst their being deposited in the temple of ancestors, a receptacle not only for the relics of antiquity, but for the solemn symbols of ancestral worship, would also tend to superinduce upon some a sacred character of which they were originally destitute.

The last vessel I shall notice is a cup made of the horn of the unicorn, whose name it bears, the shape of which is seen in the drawings already referred to. An ancient circumstance connected with this cup may probably have given rise to a modern custom common at Chinese feasts, while it also tends to illustrate some figurative expressions in the sacred Scriptures. This custom, which prevails extensively among the lower classes, consists in guests at an entertainment compelling each other to drink wine as a forfeit. Two persons seated together guess the number of fingers suddenly thrown out and withdrawn by each other, when he who mistakes the number is obliged to drink a cup or more of wine, which is thence designated the wine of punishment. A custom not dissimilar in some respects to the old Roman game of chance, called *micare digitis*, and probably of very ancient origin in China; since persons convicted of certain offences, or who had on any account incurred the royal displeasure, were condemned to drink wine out of a cup called the cup of punishment; wherefore, when this cup was given at a public assembly

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to any officer of the government, the act was always understood to imply official censure, even though the party were ignorant of any direct accusation. The Scripture reader will be reminded of such expressions as "the wine-cup of his fury,"*—"the cup of trembling,"—"the cup that my father hath given me shall I not drink it?"—and others of the same import, used to denote the punishment inflicted by God on transgressors. It does not appear, however, that any deleterious ingredient was infused into the cup, similar to the potion ancient criminals were compelled to drink; but that the cup itself being made of the horn of the unicorn, the instrument with which that creature gored other animals, was administered as a mark of displeasure, soon to be followed by punishment. The figurative use of the term "cup" was various in the Holy Scriptures; but we are not informed whether any thing in its shape, or the material of which it was made, pointed out a specific purpose. Joseph's servant, indeed, designated the cup secreted in Benjamin's sack, as that in which his lord divineth, or maketh experiments; language which, though used then to intimidate the Israelites, must have been in accordance with an Egyptian custom, which they understood, or it would have been without force; but whether the practice involved reference to the shape, material, or use of the vessel, does not appear. The same Hebrew word, which Buxtorf translates by *scyphus*, is rendered by the English translators in Exodus "bowl."†

Whether convenience, custom, or legislative enactment, gave rise to the great diversity of shape and material, found in cups of very early date, is uncertain; but the

* Jer. xxv. 15. † Exodus xxv. 33.

well-known usage of blessing the cup, and passing it round among the guests at public and social meals, no doubt originated in the use of wine poured out in libations to the gods, of which the worshippers partook as regularly and solemnly as of the victims offered in sacrifice: rites which were most probably derived from the ancient worship rendered to Jehovah. There is a very ancient custom, still prevalent on festive occasions, of pouring out a cup of wine as a eucharistic libation to the earth, for the many blessings it confers. The ceremony, which must be performed by the oldest person in the assembly, has given rise to the term *tse-tsew*,—"the sacrificer of wine,"—now applied to the duties of one who presides over a public institution; and, among other offices, to designate the head of the college established at Peking, for Mung-koo Tartar youth connected with the royal family. From the close connection subsisting between sacrifice and feasting, libation and drinking, the cup would naturally become the emblem of cheerfulness and benevolence; but how it became the token of sorrow and anguish does not so plainly appear, except it were derived from the practice of those nations which disposed of state criminals by the administration of poison. In a Chinese work of a very different character from my present authority in antiquities, I met with an allusion to a cup of cold water, which savours of the same pastoral origin as that contained in the well-known passage, "a cup of cold water given to a disciple." It was in a miscellaneous work on customs and manners written in the north of China, where primitive pastoral usages would be preserved for the longest period in the greatest simplicity. An individual is described as asking a person who had

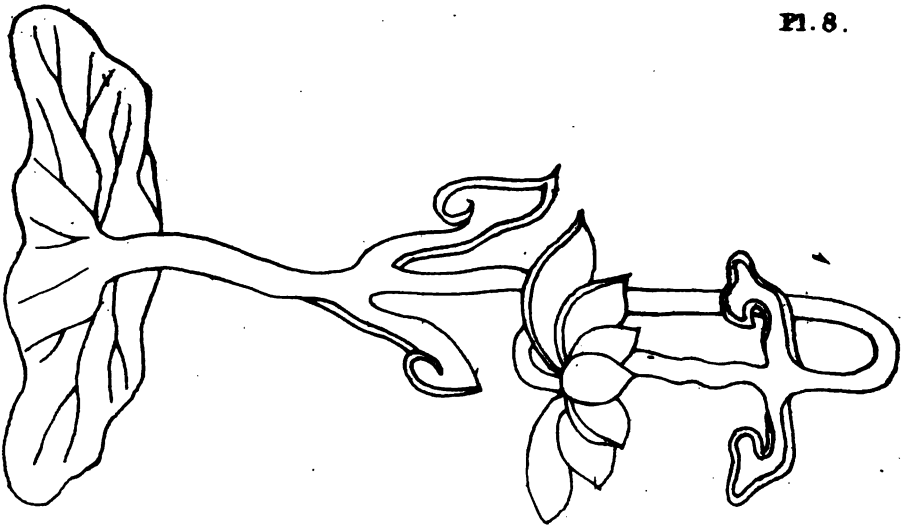
been adopted into his family in infancy—"Have you, ever since you were a little child, had occasion to give out one cup of cold or warm water, to purchase a single article of clothing?"

Bells have been known in China from the highest antiquity, during which heralds commissioned by the sovereign used them to convene assemblies of the people to hear the imperial will, and receive instruction. The most celebrated of these bells was one with a wooden tongue, made use of in the army, as well as to call the multitude together. Confucius alluded to it when he said, "Heaven would make him a wooden-tongued bell;" that is, during his retirement from office would employ him as a herald in the highways, and places of public resort, to communicate the divine purposes to the people, and rouse them to avenge their wrongs on the government. Three kinds of bells only are represented in this work: the bell of heaven, so called because supernaturally produced, with a handle like that of the Confucian bell, of a clear and an agreeable sound; the period of its invention is unknown: "the serpentine-handle bell," adorned with crystallizations on the outer surface, but the interior, like the Confucian bell, whose sound when struck is distinctly heard at the distance of a hundred paces; it was invented during the Shang or Chow dynasty: and "the round knotted bell," in allusion to the figures on its surface, of a later period, and, consequently, more ornate than the older specimens. Connected with the use of these bells was the only public oratory anciently known in China; either when the imperial messenger promulgated his sovereign's orders among assemblies of the people, or the patriot denounced the existing government as about

to be sacrificed for its crimes to the vengeance of Heaven —and hence the image of a wooden-tongued bell to denote a public instructor.

Musical instruments are of ancient origin; and, if we believe the old classics, their effect was quite overpowering. "Confucius," says the Shang-Lun, "after listening to the tones of the Shaou, did not taste animal food for three months." But no such power, instrumental or vocal, seems to have descended to the modern Chinese; who have, indeed, notes to distinguish different sounds, without skill to produce any harmonious combination of them. Nor are their instruments of a superior kind.

Musical stones are mentioned as relics of antiquity, which were probably in use to aid vocal and test instrumental music. A specimen given is called "the adjusting-rule stone," whose sound corresponded to the *shang* note of the Chinese gamut; another when struck is said to have produced a shrill sound of extraordinary loudness, and perhaps gave the key-note in singing. To correspond with the ideas entertained of ancient music by the moderns, there must have been instruments of extraordinary power and effect; for where sober history fails to gratify the veneration felt by the antiquary, sacred and sublime properties of an imaginary character are introduced to supply the deficiency. The *kin*, a kind of lyre, which, when appropriated to sacred music, is accompanied with burning incense, and supported by the most ancient and venerable collection of odes, placed under one end of it, is said in the "music classic" to represent by its length three hundred and sixty days; by its breadth, the six points of the universe; by its thickness, the four seasons; by its five strings, the original elements;



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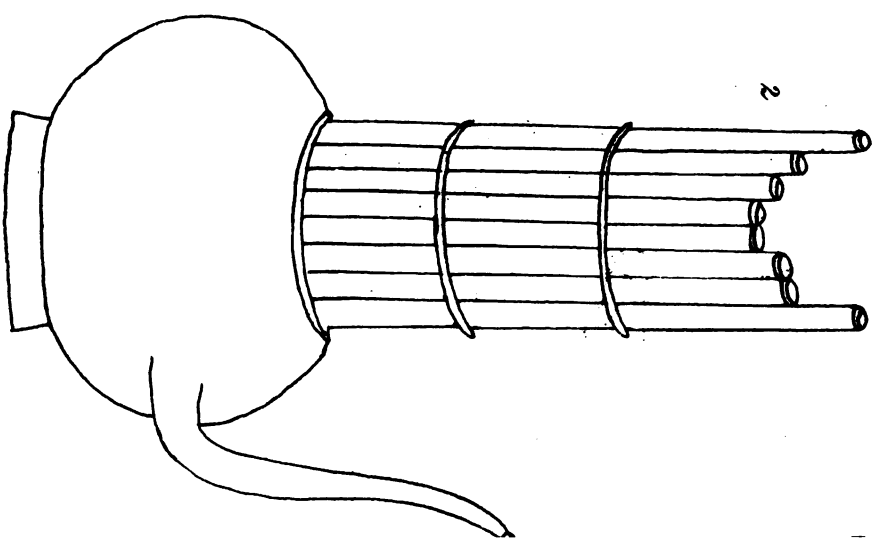

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to which two other strings were subsequently added, expressive of the harmony subsisting between princes and ministers; the thirteen resemblances or changes are equivalent to the "twelve notes of music, one for each month, and the one over to the intercalary month. It was anciently made of the *tung* wood, but afterwards of stones, by which its sounds, *under the influence of the wind*, resembled those of the drum;" and hence it would seem to have been a kind of Æolian lyre. Great veneration is attached to the *kin*, at the present day, and also to the *sih*, usually associated with it, but not mentioned by my author. The only other musical instruments he notices are the săng, with a collection of tubes the size of a goose's quill, placed in a globular vessel;* the "hollow *seaou*," something like the German flute, of which there are two figures—the one in an upright, the other in an horizontal position, called *teih*, which seems to designate a flute, blown at the side or at one end; and the phœnix, *seaou*, with twenty-three reeds or tubes, like a goose's feathers—all which are wind instruments; the "suspended drum," placed on a stand, with two balls hanging from its centre, which, when the drum is shaken, beat the ends of it; and the *pih-pan*, or Chinese castanet, made of wood resembling mahogany, and used to divide songs into verses, with their proper pauses. When we treat of Chinese poetry, their theories on music shall be noticed.

Girdles, sashes, or belts, have been long worn in China, as a part of official costume, and by gentlemen in the superior classes of society. Several specimens are introduced of the more ancient sort, which are described under the somewhat quaint and singular title of "cloudy dragon

* See Plate VIII. Fig. 2.

court belts, white as the fat of sheep." The oldest were made of leather with two ends hanging down, which were in use from the highest antiquity to the time of the Tsin dynasty.* One of the above title is said to have thirteen devices upon it, a stone at each end of splendid brightness, with representations of clouds and dragons, and rows of ingeniously carved stones, intermingled with fine hair. In the first year of Shang-yuen, of the Tang dynasty,† civil and military officers were ordered to bring to court a hand napkin, a money purse, a sword, and a coarse stone. The highest rank (the third) in both services wore belts of gold, diamonds, and thirteen devices; the next in the descending series (fourth), those of gold, and eleven devices; the fifth, of ten devices; the sixth, horn, and nine devices; the seventh, silver belts; the eighth and ninth, stone belts, with eight devices; while the common people have brass and iron belts, with six devices. At present, these belts ought to be worn only by ministers, whom the emperor himself specially appoints. The next order, Pei, is much more tasteful and ornamental than the preceding, of which I have given some specimens; particularly one composed of diamonds, another representing the male and female phœnix;‡ and a third, made of rings linked together: this last specimen has thirteen strings, constituted by a chain of rings, from each of which, except the three joined at both ends, a bell is suspended, which, by reason of a valuable stone within it, emits a "clear, prolonged, attractive sound." "The workmen," it is said, "made them beautiful revolvers; but the ancients had not the fairy work, literally 'true devils'

* This dynasty existed from A.D. 286 to 416.

† A.D. 745.

‡ See Plate IX. Fig. 2.

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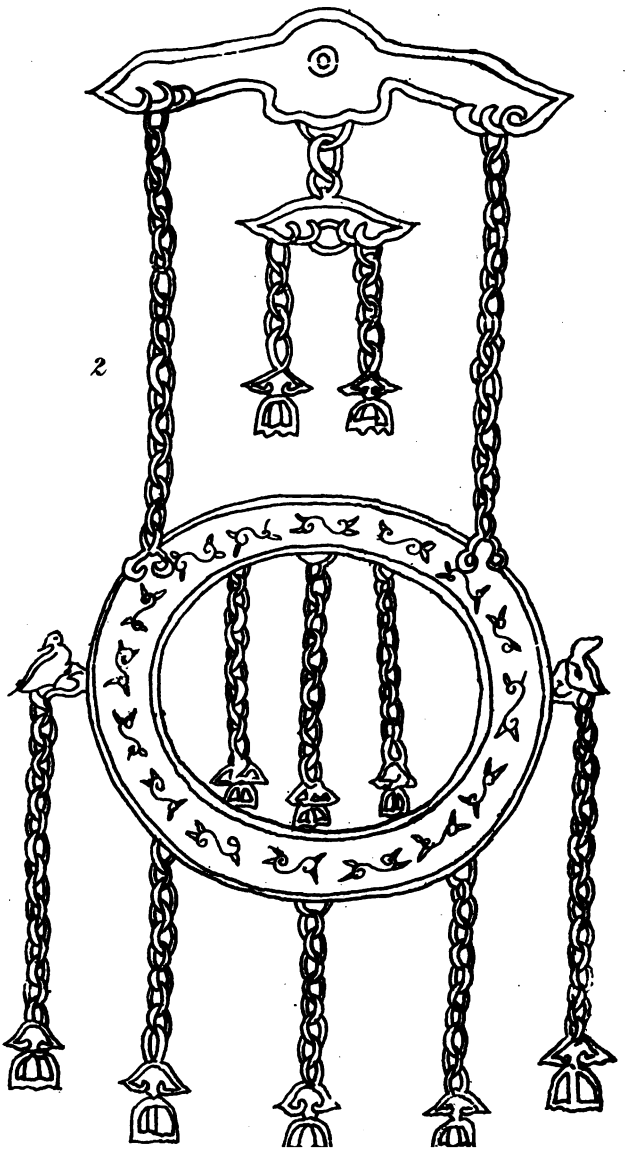

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work;'" by which we are to understand, drawings of fabulous animals, deities, monsters, and genii. History records that the superior of the state, *Tse-nan*, was presented with nine bells in tribute from another state; and that he commanded one of the ladies of his court forthwith to adorn them with golden flowers, which became a pattern to belts of this kind in future; and hence, perhaps, the origin of a sort of jingling sash worn by females at their marriage. To other specimens of girdles, given in different dynasties, are added ornamental appendages; as rings, precious stones, clasps for sashes and knots.

Rings are of very ancient origin; we find them frequently mentioned in the Old Testament. When Pharaoh appointed Joseph to be the governor of the land of Egypt, he bestowed a ring upon him; doubtless in token of the official power with which he was invested, as well as of personal regard. A ring is the symbol of eternity with the Chinese, who say it has no beginning; and hence very naturally regard it as emblematical of dignity and authority. Two rings are especially worthy of regard: one perfect, the other defective; the former an emblem of the sovereign's favour, the latter, of his displeasure, as shown towards his public servants. In olden times, when officers who had been banished to the frontier for mal-administration, had completed the term of their sentence, the one or other of these rings was sent to them by the emperor: if it were the perfect one, it denoted that he was about to restore them to their official duties, despite their temporary disgrace, without detriment to character or emolument; but if the defective ring were sent, it was a token that the offender's connection with

the government was forthwith dissolved. A similar practice seems to have obtained in Egypt, according to the well-known incident in Joseph's history, which was instrumental in raising him to his high station. I do not mean that a defective ring was sent by Pharaoh to the baker, and a whole one to the butler, though this is by no means improbable, from the honour then attached to that token; but that the practice of the two courts of China and Egypt in restoring officers to full honour, after what Europeans would consider an indelible brand of disgrace, was the same, and therefore it is reasonable to infer that formalities attending it were not dissimilar. For the figure of the defective ring, to which I have alluded, see the plate:* it is designated "the incomplete ring of the blue stone and fragrant herb of the Han dynasty;" a name derived from the materials of which it is composed, the herb which its form resembles, and the opening in it, which is represented at the bottom of the drawing. Various other rings are described as bearing the figures of different fairies, some of which were worn as female ornaments; but the complete and incomplete circles only are given as apt similitudes of power fully restored and finally withdrawn.

A specimen is furnished of an ancient court bodkin used in arranging a lady's hair; it is described as silken white, without mixture or defect, ornamented with cloudy vapour, and as having concave and convex surfaces, of elegant workmanship, probably of the Shang or Chow dynasty. It is with such an appendage as this to the head-dress that the marriage ceremony of braiding the hair of a young lady is performed among the Tartars.

* See Plate IX. Fig. 1.

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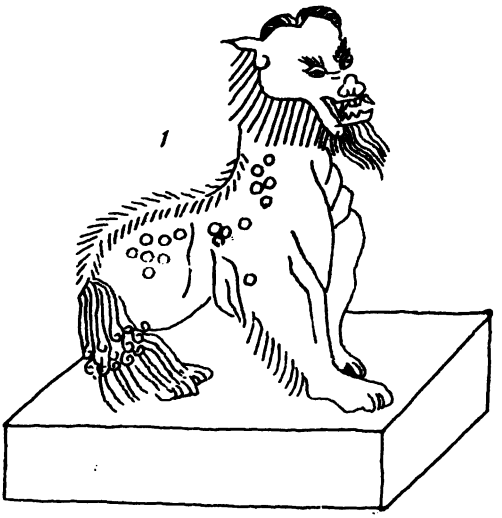

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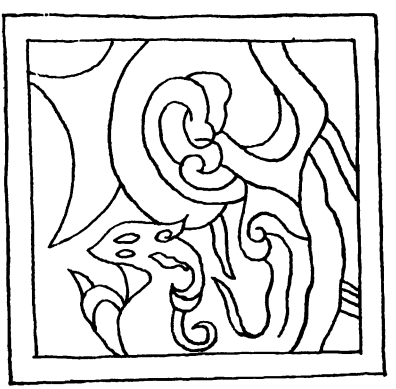

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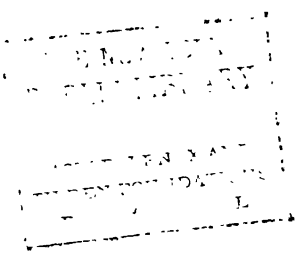
The same object is attained by knotting a sash worn by females; from which the phrase, " to knot the sash," has come to signify a marriage contract.

Seals are used in China, as in other civilized countries, to give authority to official acts; the only specimens described in this author are those which represent the seals of the Tsin and Han dynasties; the first of which is styled " the imperial seal transmitted by Tsin." It is four inches square, and three inches and a half high. One side of it is ornamented with fairy writing, on the reverse are engraven in seal characters the words, " Received from Heaven the decree of long life and eternal splendour." The inventor of this seal was the first universal ruler of China, to whom we have elsewhere alluded as subjugating the whole empire, burying alive the literati, and building the great wall; who, whatever signets, sceptres, or other official ensigns, were previously in use, was also the author of that national instrument which has ever since been designated the great seal of the empire. There are three ancient forms; two of which bear the same inscription on the reverse although there is a slight difference in the figures on the obverse; the other differs a little in words, but not in sense; it is literally, " Heaven's decree: the imperial emperor long life and prosperity;" that is, the possession of the seal is a pledge of Heaven's approbation, which secures long life and eternal renown. The seals of the Han dynasty are of a circular shape. On one specimen there are the words " eternal renown" on one side, to correspond with the engraving of an imaginary animal on the other, which, it is said, knew the faithful, whom it spared, but gored the specious and insincere to

destruction; and from this circumstance the invention and constant use of the instrument arose. Another specimen is the "connected rings' small seal," on the reverse of which are engraven the words, "great peace, ten thousand years," equivalent to the European phrases, "profound peace, God save the king." The national seal now in ordinary use is called 璽 *se*, and bears words which when translated mean, "the gem of the imperial pencil of ten thousand springs;" from which the seals of mercantile bodies and corporations, of private individuals, and of magistrates in their official capacity, differ both in name, form, and substance; and it is made of some precious stone, probably chrysopras, since that was a favourite material for ancient sceptres. Other seals are made of gold, silver, or copper, and are square or oblong, according to the rank of the possessor. An official seal is designated *yin*, and the name of the keeper of that seal in the province *chaou-mo:* literally, an *overlooker* and a *grinder;* words which could hardly have been chosen more appositely had they been designed to portray the exact official character and conduct of the party who holds it; the reason, however, of this designation does not appear. A different term is used to denote the keeper of the seals attached to the six boards at Peking. Common seals of private individuals are made of wood, on which the name of the party is cut in the seal characters of the language, from which an impression is taken by red pigment.

Specimens of coins are given, but these are not numerous. Indeed, the only production of the mint in China is a copper coin, called by Europeans *cash*, by



natives *tsëën*. It has a square hole in the centre with the words tung paou, "precious circulating medium," and the reigning emperor's name inscribed on one side thus. Several inscriptions are furnished by my author, such as, "Heaven's emoluments, eternal renown, overflowing happiness equal to Heaven, long life and joy ten thousand years, the great peace national gem, the originating source, pervading influence, successful effort, and moral goodness of human life." The same characters applied to nature denote the stability and fitness of things. The Chinese characters which represent these and similar ideas are engraven on a circular piece of copper with a square hole in the centre. The first of these coins is said to have originated with Wăn-te, during the Han dynasty, of the state Wei, who, when he had ascended the throne, ordered his ministers to examine the treasuries, who found gold, precious stones, and several thousand strings of coin, on which were characters written in the seal, official, running hand, and plain writing; this money was distributed among his assembled courtiers, who forthwith gave it to the world, saying, according to the statistics of Wei, "this money, with what is subsequently noticed, belongs to the Han dynasty."

The next class of coins is denominated the *subjugating triumphant* class, of which there are two or three specimens denominated money, though their use does not appear; as the divine dragon's,* the money spider's, and the water spirit's subjugating coin; the former of which

* See Plate XI.

is described as having the upper part ornamented with a divine dragon, and the body with figures of gods, men, dragons, and birds. In describing one of them the writer remarks, all these ornaments must have been intended for the toilettes of the princesses of the house of Tang. There is another class of medals, as they ought to be called, though still designated *tsèèn*, which were distributed by princesses of the house of Tang among their officers; this kind of stamp has the figure of a pentagon in the centre, with lines from the five angles to the circumference, within which are inscribed five characters, one in each recess, the outer line of which is a curve; the following is a specimen:—"Happiness; long-life; many male children."

The last of the series of Chinese antiquities, to which I shall allude, is that of the caps worn at court during the Han dynasty. Here, as usual, about twelve specimens are furnished. The mere names, however, of the greater part will suffice, which, as will be perceived from a rapid enumeration of them, are derived from the never-failing sources of variety to the Chinese—the celestial, terrestrial, and animal worlds. The first specimen is styled, "the orbicular cloudy court cap of nine seams." The cap of this pattern, with *nine* seams,* was exclusively appropriated to imperial majesty; with *seven* to a noble; with *five* to a magistrate; and with *three* to one of the literati. It was of exquisite workmanship, and invented by an emperor, who never suffered his ministers to wear it. There is another specimen, called the red lotus or water-lily cap, to which flower the shape of the cap is made conformable. There is no record of the period of its invention, which was probably very ancient; and sup-

* See Plate XII. Fig. 2.

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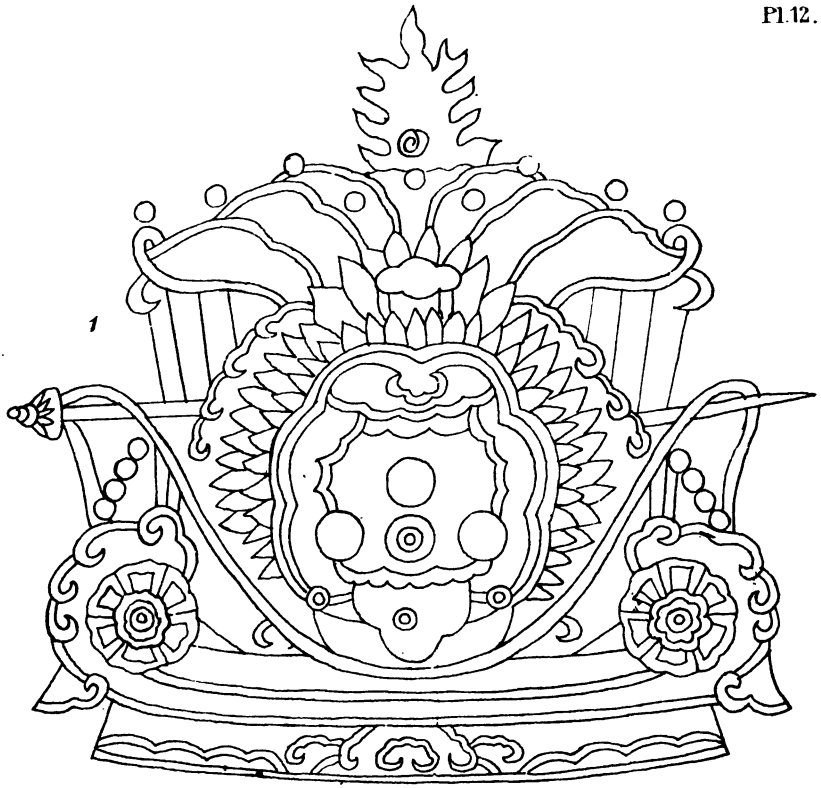

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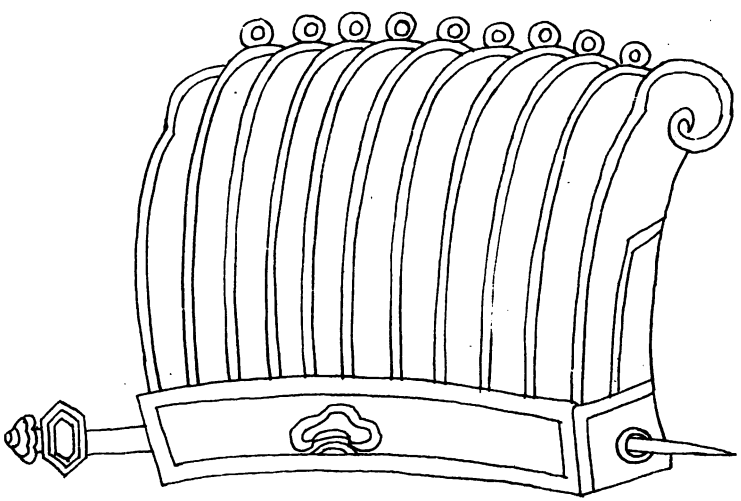

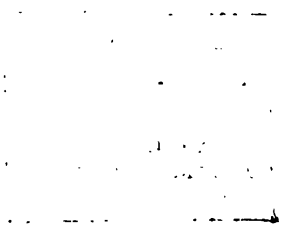

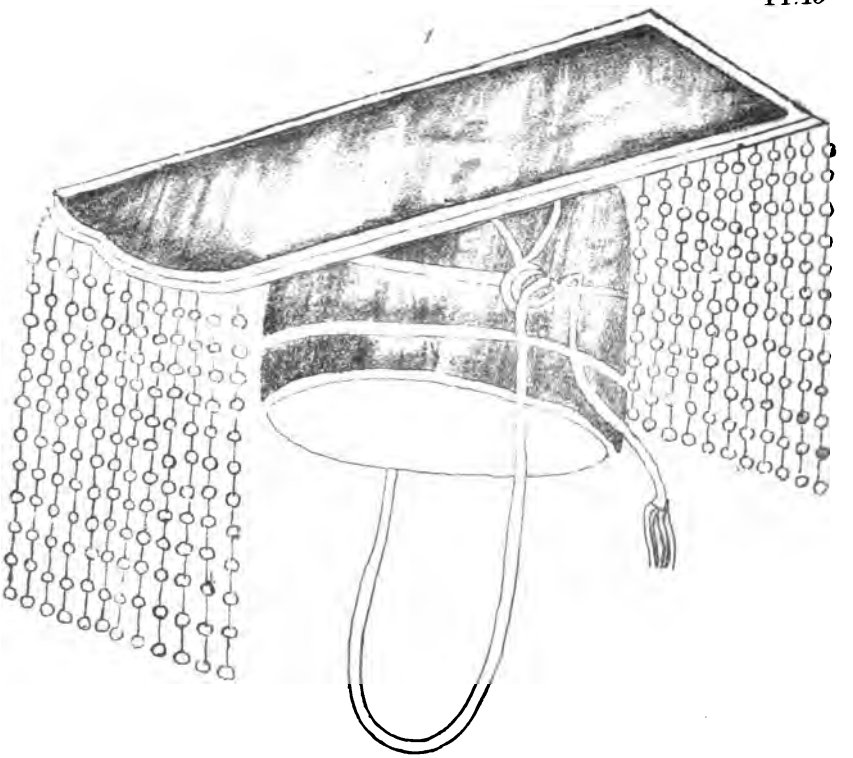

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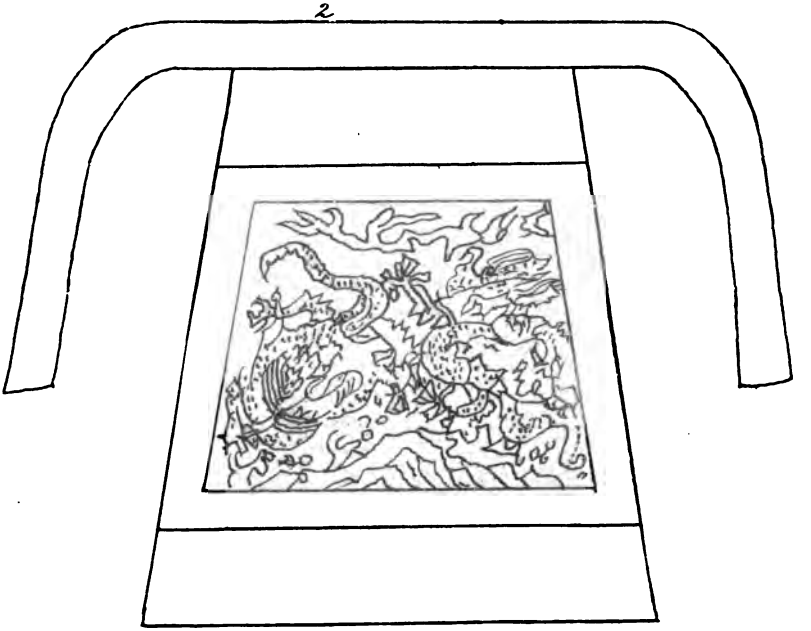


plies additional collateral evidence that its sacredness was derived from Egyptian customs and practices to which we have previously referred. There is another specimen worn by the empress, which has also the designation *seven* gems, added to that of *white* water-lily. Other names, taken from historical allusions, incidental circumstances, or some resemblance to the object, are the *swallow-tail*, the *audience cap*, the *square mountain*, the *retired scholar*, the *waning moon*, and the *fish's-tail, cap*. There were caps in use at sacrifices, worn by the officiating priest, specimens of which will be found among the illustrations. Some of these were indeed crowns* worn by ancient princes, who, as we have remarked, were the high priests of the empire; and, curious enough, a linen crown was in olden times the dress of ceremony: the only distinction between the sovereign's and a nobleman's consisting in the number of gems attached to it, of which 288 was the sacred number appropriated to the emperor.† Linen seems to have been in high repute all over the East in ancient times, as we read of the fine linen of Egypt, and of the linen garments of the Hebrews in discharging their sacred offices. The Chinese appear, in the earliest ages, to have had some dress consecrated to the service of the priesthood, which was first of all, as it would seem from the delineation of it,‡ made of the skins of animals; the most natural as well as the most significant material for such custom. State caps are sometimes made of the fur of animals, or the down and feathers of birds.

The manners, customs, and superstitious ceremonies of China and Egypt, no doubt, in some points, bear a strong

* See Plate XII. Fig. 1. † See Plate XIII. Fig. 1.

‡ See Plate II Fig. 2.

mutual resemblance; but if their claims to priority were submitted to investigation, it might be difficult, considering the high antiquity of the Chinese, to determine which was the prototype. Egypt, usually regarded as the earliest civilized community in the world, is subsequent in point of time to the rise of the first sovereigns of China, if we adopt the most credible of the native systems of chronology. It is, however, little to be depended upon. Füh-he, the founder of the Chinese monarchy, lived more than a thousand years before Menes or Mizraim, the first king of Egypt, and consequently a considerable period anterior to the Deluge. Several kings in China, according to the same authority, flourished at the same period with some of the most celebrated rulers of nations described in sacred history. It is not, therefore, in the date of events, but in the coincidence of facts and the similarity of usages, that we are to seek for evidence to confirm the theory of an ancient affinity between Egypt and China.

The ancient Egyptians, according to Horapollo, were accustomed to symbolize personal guardianship, by a male head painted red, and a female head painted yellow —both royal colours in China—placed in contrary directions, under whose power they were secure from natural calamities, "even without the aid of symbolic characters;" to which, however, in common with other Oriental nations, both ancient and modern, they also attributed many effective virtues. It is in the supposed inherent power of *letters, symbols,* or *hieroglyphs,* to guard those who wear them about their persons from malignant influences, that I would now trace a similitude between the two nations. The Chinese inscribe words and sentences on their girdles, and paste them on the lintels and posts of their doors,

not only as moral sayings worthy to be remembered and practically observed, but from the impression that they shall thereby be protected from noxious diseases and calamities often inflicted by invisible beings. The symbols mentioned by Horapollo frequently occur on Egyptian monuments, which so far confirm the truth of his statements; but from the use of the word φυλαχτηρια by his translator to represent the original word, it is probable the author intended by it certain charms suspended from the neck, or attached to other parts of the body, to defend the wearer from the influence of evil genii. The word δαιμων, in Pagan authors, it has been remarked, is used to denote both good and evil spirits, but in the New Testament it is chiefly confined to the latter sense. The Chinese word 鬼, answering to demon, usually signifies spirit in a bad sense, as its composition—由 *a fiend-like head,* 厶 *the fradulent craftiness of a fiend,* and 儿 *a man*—would imply; whence its primary significations are—the spirit of a dead man, a ghost, a demon, a devil, and that spiritual state of existence to which human beings return at death. It is also associated with words strongly expressive of evil, as 鬼 怪 fiends, fairies, hobgoblins; 鬼 魅* a malevolent fairy or elf, said to proceed from mountains and woods to injure human beings; 魔 鬼 wicked superhuman spirits—devils supposed to afflict human beings. But when 鬼 is united with 神 —(always taken in a good sense)—as 鬼 神 it denotes spirits in general, the human spirit, gods from whom aid is expected, or what Plato intended by demon as the personal guardian of virtuous men.

* Kwei-mei—an elf or mountain fairy, with the face of a man and the body of a four-footed brute, which delights to tempt the human species.

The character 𙆥 which signifies *genii*—Plato's demons of the lowest class—is composed of 人 *a man*, and 山 *a hill*. It represents a superior class of human spirits, who, having been deified, dwell in mountains and hills remote from human habitations; to whom no temples are consecrated, and who, even the most eminent of them, are not of very high antiquity; although supposed to have the power of being visible and invisible at pleasure, of raising the dead, of changing, by a species of stone which they have discovered, whatever they touch into gold, and of effecting at pleasure various other wonderful transmutations. Their eminent position has been attained by abstraction from the world, to which eight, including two females, have risen higher than any other. The same term 𙆥 is given to *heaven, gods, earth, water*, and the *human soul*, as the five *genii* by way of eminence.

This class of deities is frequently invoked by the Chinese in superstitious usages, to which they are much addicted. I have before me a volume in manuscript, containing various specimens of spells, incantations, amulets, and charms, employed especially by the sects of Fŭh and Taou. They are written in different forms, according to the specific object sought to be attained; some, when danger threatens, are intended to invoke the interposition of tutelary deities—the gods of the land and grain, of thunder and lightning, of a particular mountain, valley, river, or district; others to expel demons, to prevent diseases, to cure sick persons, to purify certain vessels and things, and convert them from common to sacred uses—as water, domestic utensils, and instruments of music—and to remove moral or physical impurities attached to the person. The accompanying charm, for expelling demoniacal influences,

may be considered as a specimen of that class to which the *expulsive power* is attached; it must be written in red ink.

The three Chinese characters, beginning from the right, are — fire, wind, and thunder. The chief virtue of these charms is supposed to reside in the symbols themselves; either in the kind of characters selected, or their particular mode of collocation; but the supplicatory form, to insure its success, must be burned; and if it have reference to the cure of personal maladies, its ashes must be drunk by the patient in a cup of tea. A charm expressive of confidence

is made thus: with directions that, when the demon does not descend according to expectation, it shall be burned, with the written paper accompanying it, to compel his descent. All the superstitious systems of the Chinese seem to take it for granted, as a primary principle, that *fire* is a medium of never-failing efficacy in human intercourse with spiritual beings.

The following sentences constitute a charm for purifying the heart:— "The great supreme, felicitous star, answers to its changes without resting. It expels diabolical influence and binds monsters; preserves life and protects the person. In wisdom, intelligence, splendour, and purity, the heart and spirit have rest and peace. The three souls, of which man is constituted, endure for ever: —the sentient principle never fails."

The form for purifying a water-vessel is thus composed:— "The highest point of illimitable space, and the essence of spiritual nonentity, mutually participate supreme sovereignty without likeness or name. They go out of existence into nonentity, the centre between

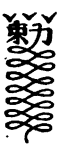
which is truth. The heavens were preceded by chaos, afterwards separated into four visible forms, rising to the utmost limits of the nine orders (of the heavens) above, and penetrating the deepest recesses of Hades beneath. An intelligent mind without obscurity, and an enlightened soul. Imperial genii! honourable and majestic, come and assemble in our hall. All changes terminate in unity: unity renovated becomes purity, purity issues in stillness, quietude, and perfect tranquillity."

In this charm reference is made to opinions prevalent in China, on the origin of the universe. In the following *pencil charm*, its efficacy appears to rest on the power of isolated symbols:—"This pencil is most extraordinary. Heaven's writers send down elegant and famous pencils. Write 天 heaven, and heaven opens. Write 地 earth, and the earth rends. Write 人 man, and man lives. Write 鬼 demon, and demons perish." In the special charm for invoking genii, *number*, *colour*, and *sound*, seem to be important appendages to the form. "When you write 三台 *three stars*, repeat in a recitative tone—three stars which produced me, *come*:—three stars which nourish me, *come*:—three stars which protect me, *come*." The directions are, that it is to be written with vermilion thus, which signifies "the imperial precepts of the three stars:"—and that the devotee is to write the *seven* strokes from right to left, and recite the sounds *yen*, *nen*, *too*, *che*, *chih*, *shă*, *hĕĕ*. Another called the presentation charm requires, when it is written within a circle of *nine* folds, that there be repeated the *nine* characters:—"heaven, earth, thunder, wind, metal, wood, water, fire, soil."

The stork-charm, or genii riding upon it as an imperial vehicle, seems to belong to the sect of Taou; since "the imperial orders of the Great Supreme Laou-keun"—the founder of that sect—is inscribed within the form of the stork thus:—The directions are to write within the neck of the stork, "beg and beseech the heavenly genii to descend quickly," and then to paste it seven times. Other forms have the number *seven* attached to them, which will remind the Scripture reader of the sacred number so frequently referred to in the Book of the Revelation: *seven* is also the sacred number of the Egyptians; and the stork, one of their most significant emblems of filial piety.

Before concluding this subject, it may be proper to remark, that the two words 符 and 咒 constitute the designations of all the amulets, spells, and charms recognized in the work from which the preceding translations have been made. The 符 refer to such as are written in a particular form or order, which, when they are designed to ward off calamities, must be worn on the person, or pasted on the posts of the doors; but in order to cure existing evils they must be burned, and the ashes dissolved in water, or drunk. The Chinese account of them is, that they were originally made of bamboo, and afterwards of slips of wood from the peach tree, but that at present they consist of written characters, on the nature and order of which human happiness or misery depends. 咒 which originally means to curse, or imprecate vengeance on others, also signifies blessing, and in this sense is recited at the time the 符 to which it appertains, is prepared, as a form of prayer. Meditation, invocation, recitatives, and

the application of fire or water, seem to be the instrumental causes by which the ceremony is rendered efficient. The 符 and the 咒 are exemplified in the following specimens:—with this charm (or 符) 敕 this prayer 勅 or 咒 must be repeated. "Heaven's *one* produced water. Earth's *six* perfects it. The *one* (unity of essence) and six (four cardinal points and the zenith and nadir) having become united, are based on the five elements (water, fire, wood, metal, earth). I now eject impurity from my mouth, and immediately the dust flies. I serve the Supreme Ruler, to whose imperial majesty I humbly submit my statements. I, moreover, presume to supplicate the immortal genii of the Pung-lae mountain."



The Confucian mode differs from both the preceding forms: it consists of writing short sentences and select symbols on the ends of a silken sash, both which hang down in front of the body, avowedly as a remembrancer of the wise and virtuous sayings of ancient sages, but not, it is to be feared, unaccompanied with superstitious notions of its power to avert evil and create temporal prosperity. Indeed it is morally impossible for a Chinaman to look upon the symbols of his language, irrespective of their meaning or the position they occupy, without a kind of idolatrous attachment. This practice, however, has given rise to a moral precept founded in the highest wisdom: it is, "be careful not merely to write the sentiment on your sashes, but to engrave it on your hearts."

A minister of state, who had faithfully served the Sung dynasty, was requested to transfer his services to the Yuen or Mung-koo Tartar dynasty; on his refusal, he was beheaded, and after his death, sentences selected from the writings of Confucius and Mencius, with reflections upon

them, were found *written within his girdle.* This circumstance is noticed by native writers, as an illustration of his superior principles. In the early ages of the world, sacred precepts and valuable moral maxims were preserved among different nations by means of inscriptions on conspicuous objects and in places of public resort. The Israelites* were commanded to bind inspired words for a sign upon their hands and as frontlets between their eyes, and to write them upon the posts of their houses, and on their gates. This mode of propagating Divine Truth, rendered necessary by the circumstances of those on whom it was enjoined, was at once striking and very effective; and from the perverse imitation of it no doubt many superstitious observances sprung up among other nations, as well as that of the Jews themselves; although, as a mere vehicle of public notification, the same method was not unlikely to have suggested itself to civilized communities, having intercourse with each other. The phylacteries of the Egyptians and the Jews correspond in the design of their origin to the girdles of the Chinese, whose practice, for civil and superstitious purposes, of writing inscriptions over their gates, and on the posts and lintels of their doors, exactly coincides with that of the ancient Hebrews and Egyptians.

The farther we ascend to the north of China the more closely do we find their habits resemble those of the ancient tribes of the earth, whether recorded in sacred or profane history, especially in their alleged intercourse with imaginary deities and disembodied spirits. The nomadic tribes, though they possess no great range of literature, may be confidently looked to for the genuine preservation

* Deuteronony vi. 8, 9.

of ancient customs and superstitions, either retained in unbroken succession from the first fathers of our race, or derived from a people no longer in possession of what was once deemed most sacred. Whatever interest may have been thrown around the re-appearance of departed shades by the fertile fancy of heathen poets, Holy Writ presents heart-stirring narrations of simple facts, which may well be accounted the basis of theories and fictions transferred under poetic imagery to other scenes and æras. It would also seem, that visions from heaven to the ancient patriarchs and prophets, through the medium of which God formerly governed the world, had been made the pretext of usurping supernatural authority, not only by utter strangers, but even enemies to the divine economy. Saul's severe enactments against those who professed to hold converse with familiar spirits, and unveil the mysteries of futurity, shows to what height the diabolical art had attained in his day, while his own recourse to the very class of persons he had proscribed strongly evinces his affiance in the truth of their pretensions. Without inquiring what appeared to Saul, whether Samuel himself, or a satanic personification of him, it is manifest from this and other instances recorded in Scripture, that the people of that age believed both in apparitions, and in their power to reveal future events.

Virgil, several hundred years later, describes the hero of his poem, when about to migrate to an unknown land, as seeking the sanction of disembodied spirits;—a sentiment derived by tradition from the communications of Jehovah to the Jewish people, on which, doubtless, the whole order of priesthood and every variety of oracles among the heathen were ultimately founded.

The Chinese are excessively addicted to necromancy. The following piece, called "dancing to the gods," will illustrate their mode of intercourse with departed shades, and the rites with which the superstitious observance is attended. It is translated from a work purporting to narrate various customs in the north of China. "When the people of Tse are sick, females have recourse to divination of spirits. The ceremony is performed by a venerable sorceress, who, beating an iron drum covered at one end with leather, and with her garments tucked up, makes a variety of postures, called dancing to the gods. But this ceremony, though general, is most frequent in respectable families, where the younger married women perform it by observing the following rites:—A wooden frame bearing flesh and goblets filled with wine are placed on a table in the hall, together with large candles burning to make the room as light as day. The female binds up her short silk petticoat, bends one foot, and makes the figure of the Shang sheep dance. Two men support her, taking hold of each arm. She talks incessantly, and minutely repeats things over and over, as if singing songs, or offering supplicatory forms of prayers, with different and irregular intonations. Many drums strike up in the house, which assail the ears like thunder. The sides of her mouth open and shut, during this confused noise of drums, from which the words she utters are not very distinguishable. Now her head hangs down, and her eyes roll about obliquely from side to side. While standing she must be supported under the arms by a person on either side; the moment support fails, she falls prostrate to the ground. Then suddenly stretching forth her neck, she takes a great leap from the earth. Immediately all

the females, petrified with horror, cry out, 'Our ancestor is come to partake of the feast.' The lights are extinguished; the blackness of Hades reigns within and without; the spectators sob and tremble; no one presumes to speak; not a sound is heard during the darkness. In the time a meal may be eaten, the female, with a stern voice, calls upon relations and kindred, old and young, to light the candles; she bends forward to solve doubts, and avert calamities; shows all the vessels on the table to be empty again. Her friends observe her countenance, to see whether it be smiling or sorrowful, and solemnly propose a series of questions, to which she returns answers with the accuracy of an echo."

I am not aware that any terms require explanation, except the words "Shang sheep dance," which may seem obscure unaccompanied with the following illustration, from a work on costume. "An ancient belt, made to resemble a sheep's head, whose flesh, beard, eyes, and carriage, were said to be like life, was called the Shang sheep belt, the same character as that used to denote the celebrated dynasty, which was employed formerly to designate sheep. The sheep, while living, is the emblem of filial piety, because it kneels down in youth to suck its dam; and when dying it is the memorial of disinterestedness: the word also means justice or righteousness; because in the act of being slain for others it makes no noise." In time of famine from drought, this animal, attended with music and dancing, is considered a felicitous omen. The ancients, who adorned their vessels with its figure, derived the custom from this idea, which is most probably the source also of the sanctity ascribed to the figure of the sheep in the ceremony just described. The

word 巫 which I have translated "sorceress," represents the distorted gesticulations of an enchantress, by which she caused spirits to descend and become visible; and although preceded by the word 男 *male*, it may mean a wizard, yet the term singly refers only to witch; while another symbol, compounded of this and 見 *to see*, means a *seer;* one who can see spiritual existences, who by fasting and solemn rites worships spirits; a conjuror, a wizard.

It would seem, from an additional sentence or two in the original, that the presiding spirit had power to punish any infraction of the laws of decorum, by instantly stripping the offender of his clothing. "When the goddess has discovered the reviler, she immediately points him out, saying, 'You have laughed at and ridiculed me with the greatest indignity; I now strip you of your lower garments.' The offender looks round in amazement at his nakedness, and forthwith climbs the top of the tree outside the door."

Connected with the preceding are the annexed short stories. "The Tartar ladies, married and single, conduct themselves with the greatest decorum. If there should be the smallest suspicion, they are compelled at an appointed time to ride in solemn state the effigy of a tiger-horse, with a long military weapon in the hand, and to dance upon a couch, which is called dancing to the tiger god-horse. The mien of the tiger is made to appear majestic and enraged, uttering barbarous sounds, than which the hot vapour and piercing cold of Kwan-chang's* altar alone could inspire greater horror."

* In allusion to a punishment in Tartarus, of alternate heat and cold, in the greatest possible extremes.

"There was a hero came to the window of a cottage to look in, when suddenly, with a long spear which he carried, he broke the window, tore his cap, and threw it inside. The whole family of females, old and young, crowd together in confusion, like geese, walking and standing, uncertain what path to take, considering and thoughtful, without an inattentive person (literally, an idle bone)." This story was intended to show the dismay of the ladies, occasioned by their male visitor.

"A certain cloth merchant travelling on the borders of the district Tsing, unexpectedly approached a temple in a state of dilapidation. Whilst deeply lamenting its affecting circumstances, a priest came and stood by his side, and thus accosted him: 'If you this moment exercise faith, in a short time the mountain you now see will rend asunder, and discover the splendour of Buddha's countenance.' The stranger, with a noble elevation of mind, undertook the responsibility. The priest rejoiced, invited his guest to enter the monastery, and behaved to him with the greatest politeness. Having introduced his friend to the different suites of apartments in the upper and lower stories of the temple, the priest importuned him for a subscription towards the repairs of the edifice. The stranger refused, on account of his poverty. The priest insisted upon his compliance, with menacing language and an angry countenance. The stranger was alarmed, and asked permission to empty his purse, the entire contents of which he gave to the priest, and was about to take his departure. The priest stopped him, and said, 'Though you gave us the whole of your property, Sir, this is not what we want. If you would in good earnest save your mother from purgatory, there is nothing

like your *preceding* her to Hades,'—and immediately seized a knife. The stranger implored mercy. The priest for a time would not listen to him; at length he acceded to his importunity, and forced him into a dark room, where he tyrannically imprisoned him. It happened that, from an embankment raised against the sea, and some part of the wall having fallen down, that a military officer passing outside the temple saw at a distance a young girl in red apparel enter the priest's cottage. His suspicions were excited; he alighted from his horse, entered the temple, and searched carefully its front and back apartments, but without finding any thing to justify them, until he came to a dark chamber, with two folding-doors, bolted, and strictly guarded, which the priest would not open, from a pretended fear of fairies and monsters. The general was enraged, broke down the bars, and went into the room, where he saw a stranger suspended from a beam by his neck; he cut him down, and in a short time the individual revived. Investigating further into the circumstances, he examined the priest by torture, to ascertain where the young woman was; who was found out to be a crow, which the divine Buddah had manifestly transformed into a young female to attract the general's attention. The priest was slain, and the stranger's property restored to him again, who joined in a public subscription for the repair of the temple, in which a cloud of incense evermore ascended, and a long course of filial piety, with uncorrupted generosity, was faithfully preserved. The original of this statement is fully and accurately known." Such tales as these are circulated, partly to ridicule Buddhism through its agents, and partly to show how suffering innocence is often rewarded, and its oppressors

punished, even in this life; while some countenance is given to the superstitious notion, that Buddah (Fŭh) manifests his benevolence by miraculous interpositions in favour of the distressed.

The Chinese are excessively addicted to superstitious practices, which arise from alternately prevailing hopes and fears, excited by eclipses, comets, meteors, earthquakes, inundations, drought, famine, locusts, and other natural phenomena; all which are regarded as indications of the displeasure of Heaven, and of the necessity of repentance and reformation. Their early cultivation of astronomy, without the light of kindred sciences to conduct them to logical conclusions, has been the means of bewildering their minds in the entanglements of astrology, by the principles of which, in the absence of divine revelation, they interpret every physical phenomenon as a supernatural token of their own inevitable destiny. Chinese historians have recorded numerous earthquakes, inundations of rivers, rushing down of mountains, storms and tempests of rain and hail, and have mentioned rain and wind appearing to them as blood; all which were viewed as portentous omens of national and moral evil, but were permitted to pass away without any attempt to explore the physical principles of their phenomena. On one occasion, the hailstones, which, from the description of them, must have been of an enormous size, killed those on whom they fell.

A comet, and a dark spot on the sun, were observed at the beginning of the fourth century, in two different reigns; and about the middle of the ninth century two falling stars, or meteors, shot across the heavens in directions by which each frequently intersected the course of

the other: their appearance, it is said, was similar to that of threads interwoven, and as large as a bowl.

The Egyptians represent the moon by the head of a dog, with which this animal, it is said, possesses a certain sympathy, especially at the time of her conjunction with the sun. The Chinese attribute an eclipse to the circumstance of a dog eating part of the sun or moon; and from this superstitious impression, whenever an eclipse takes place, loud noises are made by the people with gongs, drums, and other noisy instruments, to frighten away the supposed monster. The Chinese term for eclipse—"eaten sun or moon"—evinces the superstitious notions prevalent respecting the phenomena of the heavens when this term originated.

Although there is no weekly period of worship known to the Chinese, they have stated holidays in commemoration of traditional customs, the great changes in nature, fabled heroes of antiquity, the interment of their dead, in addition to stated seasons consecrated to the worship of topical and imaginary divinities, which are of all degrees of rank, down from the originator of the universe to the god of the pigstye.

New-year's-day, which is the first day of the first moon (about the middle of February), is esteemed of much importance with the Chinese as a day of feasting, mutual congratulations, and worship of the deities—ceremonies called worshipping the year, for the same term is used to denote the most solemn act of worship: crowds of persons repair to the different temples early in the morning, to present their offerings; and business is suspended for some time. Persons on this day light a large candle at

the temple, with the hope, if they succeed in carrying it home lighted, that they shall have a happy and prosperous year; and if by any accident they lose the light on the way, however frequently, they return to the temple and persevere in lighting it until they finally carry the candle home burning. Public offices are closed twenty days before the new year, to admit of suitable preparations for it, and twenty days after its commencement, that the prescribed ceremonial may be observed with due solemnity and etiquette. On the fifteenth of this moon there is the feast of lanterns—an emulation to excel in the exhibition of variegated lanterns, which are suspended above the door of each house, with the inscriptions on them painted in large characters. This ceremony was instituted during the Tang dynasty, but was not extensively prevalent until two or three centuries later. How like the Egyptians' feast of lights!

There is a season of public festivity, designated "the introduction of spring," which begins when the sun is in the fifteenth of Aquarius. Families go to the temple to worship, and travel into the country for amusement, during the continuance of the festival. It comprehends ten days, variously designated according to the following order:—fowl, dog, pig, sheep, cow or buffalo, horse, man, grain, hemp, and pea-day. The seventh, or man-day, is the most important. At this season, an image of the human form is made of clay at the expense of government, and called *Tae-suy*, which is worshipped as the god of the year, in allusion to the cycle of sixty years employed by the Chinese in their chronological computations, together with a buffalo of the same materials, denominated

"the spring buffalo." On the day preceding the term, the magistrate of every provincial city, *che-foo*—the chief officer of the district, *foo*—goes out in state to meet spring, when he offers sacrifice, and makes prostrations to these two figures. Several children are also dressed out in the gayest attire by the inhabitants of different streets, who tax their fancy to emulate each other in splendid dresses. They are called "spring colours," and are placed on tables, and carried on the shoulders of persons who parade the streets with them. The next day, the magistrate, already alluded to, goes forth as the priest of spring, in which capacity he is the greatest personage in the province, and with his whip in his hand strikes the buffalo two or three times, in token of commencing the labours of agriculture. It is then broken in pieces with stones by the populace, who expect from the circumstance a year of plenty. The decorated tables, with living figures upon them, are taken to the various public offices to return thanks for the silver medals distributed on those occasions.

Ordeals are instituted in China, to prove legitimacy, in the following manner. Two drops of blood, each from a father and son, if let fall together into a vessel, will coalesce—not so with the blood of strangers: and hence this method is resorted to for the purpose of testing claims to consanguineous relationship.

The Chinese are greatly addicted to times and seasons; so much is the *commencement* of any season honoured, that some deem it unlucky to offer thanksgivings for recovery from sickness near the close of the month, and prefer waiting until the beginning of the next moon, before they dedicate their pious offerings for convalescence.

Numbers, in a superstitious acceptation, are in many respects the same with the Egyptians and the Chinese. The monad, or Egyptian unity, amidst much confusion and obscurity, is considered as the generating cause of every number;* a sentiment similar to that of the Chinese, which ascribes the origin of all things to numbers. There appears also to be corresponding agreement between the numbers two and three, as used for symbolical representations in China and Egypt. The two supreme powers emanating from one source, we have already adverted to, as alike in both countries. The number three derives importance from the three great powers in the universe, which it describes. The Chinese say numbers begin at *one*, are made perfect at *three*, and terminate at *ten*. *Three*, with the Egyptians, stands for the plural; hence, when they would denote the multiplicity of an object, they repeat the word that stands for it three times. Many Chinese symbols involve the same principle; the following may be adduced as specimens:—three suns to denote effulgence; three tongues, excessive talking; the symbol for hair, three times repeated, expresses the fur of animals, the down of birds, and any thing delicate, soft, and beautiful. Three forms of the symbol for grass constitute the generic term for plants, herbs, and trees; three trees represent a forest. Many other characters might be adduced, which derive an intensity of meaning from their three-fold form. The Egyptians use the symbol three to denote dumbness, because, if a child does not speak in three years, it is presumed he will never be able to speak. The same principle is involved in the Chinese reason for

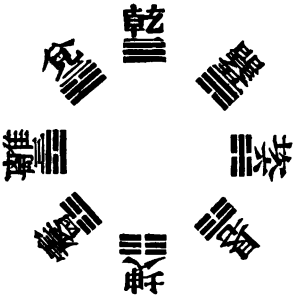
* Horapollo, Book i. sec. 11.

mourning three years for the death of a parent, because children are peculiarly helpless for that space of time.

In the absence of inspired teaching, which enabled Hebrew patriarchs and poets correctly to interpret the economy of nature, the Chinese, on the principle that the heavens do rule, have elaborated systems of superstition from the properties and apparent motion of the planets. Their speculative notions on the origin of the universe, which gave birth to their astrological and other systems of divination, occurred, it is said, so early as three thousand years before the Christian æra, when Fŭh-he drew eight diagrams to coincide with the marks on the back of the tortoise. But though these mystic symbols were discovered so early by this celebrated person, the honour of analyzing them was reserved for a member of the Sung dynasty, who introduced the circle,* to which he applied the terms—"extreme limit; chaos; primitive existence; unity."

On the original division of unity, a line — which represents it, became two — — and then there existed an odd and even number; the even number was Yang, which denotes male energy or perfection; the odd number Yin, female energy or imperfection. These lines, one whole and the other divided, or an odd and an even number, by placing on each first a whole and then a divided line, produce the sze-seang, thus: on the whole line place a whole line ⚌; then on the whole line place a divided line ⚍; next on the divided line place a whole line ⚎; and then on the divided line place a divided line ⚏: these are the sze-seang, or four similitudes:—and by the same rule, placing on each of these first a whole and

* See page 135.



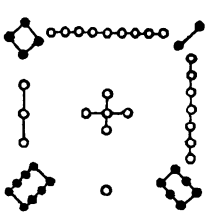
then a divided line, the eight diagrams are obtained, thus. In the "Classic of changes," from which this figure is taken, the same method is carried out to *six* lines one above another, and to sixty-four diagrams, which are represented in a circle as emblematical of heaven, because heaven, according to Chinese notions, is round; and the same number of diagrams, so disposed in a square as to make eight every way, is a similitude of the earth, which, on the principles of the same philosophy, is an immovable square in the centre of the universe, around which the heavens constantly revolve.

Hence changes produced by this system may be carried on without end, the use of which, the Chinese are candid enough to acknowledge, is not apparent, except to show that the doctrine of changes is infinite. The whole, according to the standard work* on this subject, appears to consist in the representation of a geometrical series, whose constant multiplier is two: as one multiplied by two produces two, two produces four, and four produces eight. The same results, however, are obtained by division; as one divided becomes two, two divided become four, four divided become eight. This representation is made by lines, to illustrate the manifold changes which occur in nature and in the affairs of the world; changes made known to the diviner when he applies his process of divination to the linear symbols of his mystic numbers.

The figure 書洛 of which this is a copy, is given in

* Yih-king.

the Yih-king, as a representation of the tortoise, the upper part descriptive of the head, the lower of the feet.



It is formed by marks which stand for the symbols of the universe, so disposed as to make ten every way, thus: nine and one—top and bottom; two and eight—the upper right and lower left angles; three and seven—the left and right sides; four and six—the upper left and lower right angles; while the marks in the centre are descriptive of the five original elements or agencies of the earth already noticed:—beginning at the bottom and proceeding by the right in the following order: water, fire, metal, wood, and earth in the centre; which, with the five planets—namely, the golden star—Venus; the wood star—Jupiter; the water star—Mercury; the fire star—Mars; the earth star—Saturn—constitute the perfect number *ten*, which obtained this distinction with the Chinese, because the chief powers of heaven and earth, the only correct models of human conduct and pursuits, are each five in number. This sentiment is carried out with singular minuteness in all the ramifications of society; of whose physical, social, and political systems, it constitutes an indispensable part. And since divination, on which we are now entering, exhibits the outward forms of the pervading influence of ancient superstition, it may be proper to adduce an illustration or two on each point.

Astrology, designated "the science of the breath of the stars," although prohibited in China before the Christian æra, is still practised by a class of magicians, who pretend to exercise this art from observing the halo round

the sun, the principles of which involve the assumption that the destinies of individuals are controlled by the operations of nature, to which certain visible signs, known only to the initiated, correspond. Moreover, the five agents represented in a circle, of which earth is the centre, are said mutually to operate on each other, in an alternate process of generation and destruction, reproduction and annihilation, according to their relative position; a theory which teaches not only that certain physical properties exert mutual influence, even where no connection can be traced, but that the same principles combine together both the natural and the moral world in the reciprocal relations of cause and effect; so that a transgression of any one of those principles would, either as cause or effect, indicate a contravention of the laws of nature. The indissoluble connection of this theory with the medical art, obliges the physician to understand it before he can determine the state of his patient's pulse; since the five agents are said to influence the viscera of the human frame—liver, heart, lungs, kidneys, stomach—to which they correspond in number and the order of their arrangement. A similar connection subsists between the substances of the materia medica and the same five elements, under each of which every variety is comprehended. For example: herbs, classed under the element wood, produce a beneficial influence on the liver; substances connected with fire, or caloric, operate on the heart; properties of earth, or soil, affect the spleen; those which are classed with metal control the lungs; whilst the affinities of water are adapted to the kidneys.

The five tastes, *sourness, sweetness, bitterness, acritude, saltness,* have derived their number from the elements,

and are possessed of certain affinities, which are classified with the viscera in the following way: that is, *sourness* with the liver, because it is allied to wood; *sweetness* with the spleen, because it belongs to the earth; *bitterness* with the heart, because it relates to fire; *acritude* with the lungs, because they are united to metal; and *saltness* to the kidneys, because they are connected with water. In like manner the original colours—green, yellow, carnation, white, black—are applied to the five elements and to the human frame for superstitious purposes in the following order: *green* to wood, and therefore to the liver; *yellow* to the earth, and therefore to the spleen; *red* to fire, and therefore to the heart; *white* to metal, and therefore to the lungs; *black* to water, and therefore to the kidneys. These affinities and repulsions, which are recognized by all writers on Chinese physics, derive their origin, according to popular belief, from the natural constitution of things. The exquisite mechanism of the eye, fitted by Infinite Wisdom to receive correct impressions of external objects, is in nothing more sensitively displayed than in its perception of colours. For whatever purposes in the natural world these agreeable diversities were ordained, they are not only subservient to the gratification of the organs of sense, but, on the principle that nature is an infallible guide, are constituted the indexes of certain moral qualities and official distinctions in public society.

Nations both savage and civilized have alike assumed specific colours as badges of rank, costume, or hereditary right; and if this usage prevails to some extent in climates least favourable to the development of beautiful colours, how much more in tropical regions, where external beauty reigns in the greatest luxuriance throughout the year.

Since there is but one model for all countries, there must be a general agreement in the choice of colours, while the characteristic distinctions of national costume will consist in devices derived from the prevailing habits of the people.

Colours in China are emblematical of rank, authority, virtues and vices, joys and sorrows. *Yellow* is the imperial colour, assumed only by his majesty and his sons, or the lineal descendants of his family, who may wear a golden yellow sash and a yellow bridle. *Purple* is prescribed, by the laws of the Board of Rites, for grandsons. *Green* or blue for the chairs of the princesses. Green is the colour of the painted board carried before a criminal going to be executed, on which the authority for his punishment is inscribed. *Blue* indicates official rank of the third or fourth degree. *Red* is a symbol of virtue, especially of truth and sincerity; hence, to say a person has a *red* heart, means that he is without guile; this is also the colour of the first degree of official rank. The emperor writes his special edicts in vermilion. Proclamations offering rewards for the apprehension of offenders are designated "the red flower," because voluntary services are sometimes rewarded by decorating the head with a flower of this colour. *Black* denotes guilt and vice; hence, to say that a man "has a black heart," is a contumelious expression for depravity. *White,* as among the ancient Hebrews, is used in mourning, and to denote moral purity; it also indicates official rank of a lower degree.

The Tartar dynasty has introduced a novelty into the official costume of the country, by conferring on persons who have distinguished themselves, peacocks' feathers, of *one, two,* or *three* eyes, and of different colours, according to their degree of merit, to hang from the top of the cap

down the back. The Chinese, transferring the notion which they entertain of man, as a transcript of the heavens, to the body politic, have bestowed on the six celebrated Boards of Peking, titles which correspond to the phraseology of the natural world: thus the members of the Board of Appointments were called "heaven's officers;" of the Board of Revenue, "earth's officers;" of the Board of Rites, "spring officers;" of the Military Board, "summer officers;" of the Board of Punishments, "autumn officers;" of the Board of Works, "winter officers." The number of these boards was doubtless borrowed from the term "six points," which expresses the four points of the compass and the poles of the horizon, and shows that the idea of a world in miniature prevails with regard to the public constitution of society as well as to the body, which the Chinese consider as a little universe, over whose heaven, earth, and four seasons, rulers must be appointed.

The mariner's compass, a sort of connecting link between the phenomena of the heavens, the regulations of the earth, and the state of man in his social and public relations, was derived, according to tradition, from the eight diagrams of Hwang-te, who invented the chronological cycle of sixty years. Other and better testimony dates its origin fifteen hundred years later. It is designated the wheel which points to the south; and as it was used first to discover ways through vast solitudes and crowded forests, it would soon in the hands of the astrologer and soothsayer, habituated to observe the heavens, become a mighty instrument of terror and deception to the uninitiated. The top of the figure represents the south, the bottom of it the north, the left hand indicates the east, the right hand points to the west; the upper angle left, the

south-east, the lower angle left, the north-east, and the corresponding angles, the opposite points. Without giving unwarrantable credence to chronological records, the high antiquity of the Chinese compass may be presumed from its uses in forests and deserts in the infancy of their experience, from the sacred character attached to it in a figurative sense, by commending any useful book as the *compass* of the subject to which it refers, and from its being identified with the first systems on record, in perhaps the oldest written medium in the world, which still continues to be a living language.

The connection of man with the phenomena of the heavens, and of the atmosphere generally, together with the five elements, and the symbols of the chronological cycle, professedly derived from heaven and earth, supply abundant materials to the fortune-teller, who pretends to calculate destinies for no other object than personal aggrandisement. The five elements are allied to the hands, the cheeks, the forehead, the chin, and the nose, and to the five organs of sense, among which the eyebrows are included for physiognomical purposes, as well as to constitute a standard of beauty. Not only the character of individuals, but their fortunes, are determined, both from the indications which these signs furnish, and from the natal hour. But what is still more remarkable, good or bad fortune is professedly known from the structure of the bones, according to the theory, that some bodies are constructed of noble, and others of mean bones; whence the contemptuous expression in common use, "your whole body is composed of mean bones."

The following record in the San-kwo* may be adduced

* Vol. x.

in illustration: Kung-ming, the celebrated general in the civil wars of the third century, deeply skilled in divination, to whom we have before alluded, ordered an officer, who had left the enemy and joined his standard, to be instantly led out to execution. When his friends remonstrated with him, he replied that he perceived a rebellious bone on the back part of that person's skull, which augured a disposition to revolt, and that if he were not executed, he would hereafter prove their enemy.

From the supposed relation of the elements to the five points, east, west, north, south, and centre, a distinct superstition, designated "the wind and water profession," has been derived—a sort of geomancy, which, by ascertaining the proper site of a house or tomb, avoids the baleful influences of air and water in certain devoted localities, whose position and scenery deteriorate the fortunes of men. Some Chinese at Malacca, when the Missionaries were about to build a place of worship just opposite their temple, begged them to desist, as it would spoil their wind and water. There is a similar prejudice with regard to time: when any one thinks of removing, commencing a journey, or taking any important step in life, persons professedly skilled in such mysteries are hired, to predetermine, by a variety of unmeaning ceremonies, what days are lucky, and what are unlucky.

The principal modes and circumstances of divination are *figure*, *number*, *position*, and *oracular responses*, which, attended with certain rites, constitute symbols of interpretation applicable to all the mysteries of fate. The tortoise, already alluded to as a consecrated emblem of good fortune, was employed by the ancients in divination as a test of the conformity of their conduct and proceedings

with the will of the Supreme Power: thus marriages, if happy, must have been previously recorded in heaven; and therefore cannot but be verified by the symbol of its will on earth, in the choice of ministers by the sovereign, and in the nomination of the successor to the throne, the fact of which, if ordained of heaven, will be indicated by the appearance of the prognostic. The process peculiar to this method of divination consists in scorching the shell of the tortoise until its veins are seen, from the development of which the question at issue must be determined. The symbol of this operation, indicating the longitudinal and transverse lines on the tortoise shell, was originally drawn thus ; it now signifies, to conjecture, to guess, and forms one of a class which strikingly illustrates the relation between some Chinese characters and certain popular superstitions of which they are the indexes.

Divination by *numbers* is effected by reeds, portions of bamboo, or the herb *she*, for which purpose sixty-four slips of the plant (because this number is the square of the eight diagrams), of different lengths, are placed in a case and drawn out, under certain circumstances previously agreed upon by the parties, which, being referred to for decision in doubtful matters, constitutes it pre-eminently the mode of casting lots. The officers of government ascertain by this means in what part of the empire they are to be located. The names of all the provinces are inscribed on a slip of bamboo, and each officer being appointed to serve the province whose name he draws, his own act decides his fortune. So thoroughly is this superstition inwrought into the political and social systems of the Chinese, that although considered by Europeans as too absurd for grave refutation, its symbolical instru-

ments, nevertheless, betoken practical results, which involve the present and future destinies of myriads of human beings. If devout and anxious worshippers present themselves in the temples of their respective sects, to obtain a divine response to their prayers, there can be no hope of success, except for reasons indicated by these signs. If the trader requires a licence from the government to vend his merchandise, the divination symbol must constitute his authority. If the lictor is about to punish a criminal, sentence cannot be legally executed without the presence of this omen of superstition. It is not, the reader will perceive, a civil warrant merely, as in European countries, to secure the ends of justice, but part of a complicated and mysterious plan of spiritual despotism, which ever hangs *in terrorem* over its deluded votaries.

The oldest records on divination by *numbers* are found in the *Yih-king*, which reduces the subject to four particulars: *instruments*, as the sixty-four slips of wood, whose names vary with the circumstances of its use; *efficient causes*, or the spiritual and indivisible energy embodied in the symbol; *external* signs, or the state of the prognostic on which results chiefly depend; and *ideal representations*, or comparisons between natural objects and occurrences, lucky or unlucky, in personal experience; as "the three stars," whose felicitous influences are respectively sought, in "happiness," "official emoluments," and "long life." The material universe first displays its objects, and then, by means of numbers which begin at one, are made perfect at three, and terminate at ten, consummates its affairs. The highest point, whether designated fate, source, or essence, is symbolized by one. The operations of this mysterious abstraction are personified by two: its lucky

and unlucky influences are determined by sixty-four, and by six times sixty-four—numbers which are the abstraction of obedience to nature, and the substance of her alternations and changes. It may be dispersed into ten thousand forms, while it is still combined in one essence. Without minutely following the writer's mystical exposition of the science, it may be remarked that he alludes to an influence so subtle, as to traverse every conceivable spot in the universe, while it statedly occupies the centre of the human system. Its duration is expressed by the twinkling of an eye; its locality is defined by the boundary which separates motion from rest; and its power surrounds, embraces, and preserves all things. It has a vital essence and an external action embodied in the circulation of the animal spirits and in the operations of the mind; while it is united with heaven and earth in virtue, with the sun and moon in splendour, with the four seasons in order, and with demons and gods in good and evil. But after all these descriptions, and others of a similar nature, which I have not copied, the writer concludes by saying that such combinations and permutations have sprung from a nameless property, the realities of which the student would do well to investigate—nay, which he ought to understand.

The following practical directions occur in describing the process of divination:—In a chosen and purified spot make a house of reeds, with a southern aspect, in the centre of which place a couch, five cubits long and three broad; cover fifty of the divination plants with red silk, and having enclosed them in a bag of rushes, place the bag in a case on the north side of the couch; set up a wooden frame on the south of the case, occupying the north of the two divisions of the couch; place vases for holding

incense matches south of the frame work, and a fragrant vessel on the south of the vase, as a token of the utmost reverence. Such are the ceremonies to be observed when this 蓍* species of herb is employed; but when the plant is used of which this character 筮 is symbolical, others must be added; such as sprinkling the floor with water, sweeping it and taking up the dust, placing an inkstone, a pencil in water, and a cake of ink, on a yellow board east of the censer. Still further to the east, the diviner, whose passions have been duly regulated by previous fasting and abstinence from bodily enjoyments, stands with washen hands, facing the north and clothed in pure garments, burning incense with the most profound reverence.

In these last-mentioned rites there is something not greatly dissimilar to the vision of Ezekiel,† in which the prophet saw "a man clothed with linen, and having a writer's inkhorn on his loins, go with other persons of the vision, and stand beside the brazen altar." The Hebrew word translated "inkhorn," not only denotes a case for instruments of writing, which are similar to the Chinese stone and pencil and ink, as related above, but appears to be derived from a word signifying *to divine*, which occurs in other parts of Holy Writ, with special reference both to the result of the commission, and the process by which it was to be fulfilled. The Hebrew word rendered *scribe*, from "to number," not only points out the person who fulfils the duties of this office, but answers to the diviner, who, standing clothed in appropriate vestments near the altar of incense, carefully examines the

* *She*, is the name of this and the following character.

† Ezekiel ix. 2.

prognostics, and reports the nature of his observations to his waiting disciples. In like manner, the person in Ezekiel's vision stood beside the brazen altar in his sacred apparel, bearing the instruments of his official authority, as if he were the *enumerator* as well as the *scribe*. The only method, as it appears to me, of accounting for such coincidences, is that of ascribing the detail in both cases to an Egyptian origin.

With regard to our next point, *divination by position*, the ancient orientals divined by the manner in which the instruments they employed fell to the ground, as in the use of arrows—which, as Gibbon remarks, was "an ancient and famous mode of divination all over the East,"—on which names were sometimes inscribed, when they were all mixed in a quiver, to be drawn out, and the thing determined according to the name drawn, similar to the Chinese method of drawing with reeds already alluded to; but what especially claims our attention is their being shot from a bow, that conclusions may be drawn from their flight, or their being cast up into the air, and the event decided according to their position on falling to the ground. The Chinese modes resemble some of these. One consists in throwing three copper coins from a tortoise-shell box, and inferring from their fall whether the fortune of the inquirer will be good or bad. In general, one person presides over the ceremony; sometimes, however, several are employed, when, if there be a difference of opinion, that of the majority is considered as the true interpretation. Another method, frequently adopted in temples, is by two pieces of wood or bamboo, made round and in the form of a crescent; probably in allusion to the new moon, whose figure it resembles, divided lengthwise

into two equal parts, to which there is both a round and a flat surface. The individual who performs the ceremony kneels on the ground, and in that posture throws these two pieces up into the air, the position of which, when fallen to the earth, determines his fortune. If both the flat surfaces lie uppermost, they are called by the name of the male energy in nature, to which we have frequently referred, or "the cup of expectation," and are deemed infelicitous; if both the round surfaces are turned upwards, they are named after the female power, or styled "the cup of prostration," and indicate peace and rest; but if the round surface of one and the flat side of the other lie upwards, the omen is called "the holy sage's cup," and is considered perfectly felicitous.

Great attention is paid to *dreams* by the Chinese, which they profess to interpret, from their connection with astrology, agreeably to the following passage:—"By the sun, moon, stars, and hours, divine the felicitous or infelicitous import of the six dreams, which are—a correct dream, an alarming dream, a thinking dream, one that resembles rational thoughts, a waking dream, a joyful dream, and a fearful or perturbed dream. Those dreams, however, which come under the rules of divination, are reduced to three classes: such as arise from some apparent cause, are strange and monstrous, and beyond all that had been anticipated.

That a people like the Chinese, who are avowedly in close intercourse with the shades or manes of deceased human beings, should refer the solution of their doubts to departed sages, and other deified mortals, affords no cause for surprise. One method of seeking supernatural counsel is, to suspend over a quantity of sand a pencil or reed,

which, under the guidance of some invisible being, forms symbols containing answers to questions proposed by the applicant. The government, however, seriously discourage the practice. Not many years ago, a deposed civilian was condemned to death for publishing an answer alleged to have been received in this way from Confucius, the purport of which was, that the emperor of China, discontinuing his annual visit to the tombs of his ancestors, should perform the necessary ceremonies of worship by deputy; and that a deified warrior of the Han dynasty, who is generally worshipped by the military, and highly honoured by the reigning family, should be deprived of the title of emperor: sentiments which were declared to indicate the most daring impiety. Such superstitions are based on the principle that man, after death, not only retains his intellectual faculties in full consciousness, but that he is able to foretel events which may occur in all future time among the inhabitants of the present world; but while numerous idolatrous practices among the heathen have no consistency, except on the belief of man's immortality, it is a theory which produces no beneficial results even of a moral character.

The *marriage covenant* has ever been considered as most important all over the East, the rites of which have from the earliest times been celebrated with every demonstration of joy and splendour befitting the rank of the parties. The peculiar reserve of the sexes towards each other, which so strikingly characterizes oriental manners, has originated usages of a description totally alien from those of Europe. The influence of climate is doubtless the principal source of early marriages. But many customs, independently of physical causes, are peculiar

to the quarter of the globe which the human population first occupied. So faithfully and continuously have remote customs been handed down, that, by comparing the oldest records in the world with practices observed at this day, we not only find the truth of sacred history corroborated, but seem borne backwards to the very period in which the patriarchs and fathers of our race existed. What was the peculiar form of the ceremonial in the primitive ages of the world does not appear, except in the congregation of friends at the nuptial feast; but if there were any other, it was doubtless of the simplest and most expressive kind. The parents of the parties, after their son had made his choice, always formed the contract; and if we, on some points, except the Hebrews, we are struck with the entire surrender by children of their future destiny, with whatever predilection they might have, to the guidance of parental judgment. Though sons and daughters of respectable families in the West usually defer to parental authority, still, except in royal marriages, nothing occurs similar to the constant practice in the East of parties seeing each other for the first time on the evening of their nuptials. This infelicitous arrangement is based on the absurd custom of prohibiting interviews between the sexes before marriage. In China, both parties are usually very young, whose parents or guardians choose their companion for them, yet not without some regard to their will. A go-between, who may be of either sex, is essential to the formation of the marriage union. The title and office are derived from a personage called "the moonlight old gentleman," who was seen by an aspirant to the conjugal relation reading the marriage book of fate by moonlight, and bending over a bag in which were the

red strings to bind together the feet of man and wife;—a bond, he said, which could not be severed though the individuals lived ever so widely apart, and the families cherished against each other ever so desperate an enmity; hence the expression "silken strings," which bind the nuptial cups, and perhaps also the origin of the proverb, that "whether a wife shall be a treasure, and children a source of emolument, is previously fixed by fate."

After the parents of a young man have resolved to procure a wife for him, the first person employed is the diviner, who, having ascertained the name of the young lady, the day and hour of her birth, from the go-between, by whom she is seen and described to the youth's friends, proceeds on the principles of his art—astrology, the flight of birds, or some other natural phenomenon—to determine whether the consummation of such a marriage would prove felicitous. If it would, the go-between is sent by the friends of the youth to announce the joyful tidings to the lady's parents, and request them to give a written promise of marriage, the reception of which is acknowledged by costly gifts of silk, silver, gold, sheep, wine, fruit, and other presents, according to his circumstances, which are made by the young man to the maiden to ratify the espousals. The next step in the process requires that a messenger be sent to the parents of the bride elect to ask them to fix a day for the solemnization of the marriage; after which the preparatory ceremonies are concluded by the bridegroom's going out in the evening to meet his bride. But although the preliminary arrangements are thus extended to six divisions, these are practically comprehended in three: writing the marriage settlement, sending the previous presents, and solem-

nizing the nuptials: this is the Chinese ceremony. The Tartar ceremony differs from it, in that a matron is sent from the bridegroom with a pin of gold, silver, wood, or copper, to braid the young lady's hair, which is considered as fixing the espousals.

The preliminary customs in use with Chinese youth are, to wear a scarlet scarf in token of joy, together with a bonnet, formally placed on the head by his father, and to take another name, expressed by 字, which, singularly enough, denotes the symbols of the language, literature, to love, to cherish, and to promise a lady in marriage. The young Chinese female changes the mode of braiding her hair, assisted by her youthful friends, who shave her face, and attend to other ceremonies, one of which is to sit and weep with her until the day that she leaves the parental abode to serve a husband. On the day of marriage, relatives and friends send their congratulations and good wishes, accompanied with presents; some suitable to the toilette, others of a more important character, among which are tablets bearing felicitous inscriptions, and geese. Wild geese have been recognized from the most ancient times in China as an emblem of conjugal harmony, by reason of their proceeding in company, north or south, agreeably to the dictates of nature; that is, in compliance with the requirements of the season.

Domestic geese are honoured as an emblem of fidelity, which is symbolized by a goose made of wood or tin, and carried before the marriage procession, consisting of the bridegroom and his friends and attendants, who in the evening of the marriage day go with music, lanterns, an ornamented chair, and an artificial pavilion, to the bride's habitation to fetch her home to the abode of her husband.

When she arrives at the gate, various instruments of music begin to play, and the bride's attendants carry her on their shoulders over a pan of coals placed within the door into her chamber. Afterwards she and her husband, seated in the sleeping apartment, which is designated the hall of songs, worship the matrimonial goose, where a table is prepared with food and wine, at which the bride and bridegroom, sitting alone, and eating together for the first and last time of their lives, proceed to perform the ceremony of joining cups, by drinking together a little of "the wine of the decorated candle:" the bridegroom drinks a small quantity of it; and the bride places the cup to her lips, while she covers her face with one hand, under the pretence of drinking; this act being considered as sealing the marriage covenant, is an indispensable part of the ceremony.

There are various other ceremonies, very trivial in themselves, but of vast importance in the estimation of the Chinese to the future well-being of the newly-married couple. A matron who has reared a numerous family must prepare the sleeping-room, and pronounce a benediction on the parties. The day after the marriage the husband and wife enter the hall to worship the family deities, and pay their respects to their parents and other relatives, but retire to their chamber to receive the visits of their young friends from without, who make it a season of mirth, and enjoy themselves by various jokes and humorous remarks on the bride and bridegroom, designated attacks upon them. On the third day, the female visits her parents in a decorated chair prepared by her husband, who gives an entertainment on the occasion. The nuptial ceremonies are kept up for a month, at the

end of which the bride's parents send her a head-dress, and provide a feast for their son and daughter, which concludes the whole series of ceremonial rites.

The ceremony of sealing the marriage bond in other parts of the East, though it differs in some of its details, is substantially the same as that of the Chinese. I mention one that I witnessed among the Malays, in the superior class of society, who made the most costly preparations for the celebration of their nuptials, and scrupulously observed all the forms incumbent on their rank. There were three days of feasting and preliminary arrangements, during which the bride was visited by her friends, and adorned by her attendants with jewels, raiment, and perfumes, supposed most likely to render her acceptable to the bridegroom; on the evening of the third day from the commencement of these ceremonies, when the bride was shut up in her own apartment with her female friends, the bridegroom came to the door, and demanded admission. A voice from within asked who was there? and on what errand the visitor had come? questions which the bridegroom answered by calling aloud his name, and demanding the young lady within to be given to him for his wife. In reply he was required to state what present he proposed to make if the doors were opened? A diamond of considerable value was promised. The doors were immediately thrown open, and the husband, on presenting the precious stone, was admitted to the presence of his bride, who accompanied him to the nuptial feast spread upon a mat on the floor, on which they both sat down to eat. It was at this feast, prepared in the evening, and consisting of all the deli-

cacies afforded by the climate and season, with a large bowl of rice in the centre, that the ratification of the marriage agreement took place, which in its essential point is the same as among the Chinese; and was, in all probability, the primitive custom of sanctioning marriage. It is impossible, in referring to these observances, not to be struck with the illustrations they afford of customs and expressions in the Sacred Scriptures, such as decking the bed of the bride of Solomon, anointing the person of the bride with perfumes and myrrh; the great gaiety and festivities of the party kept up for a considerable period, according to the rank of the individuals, and various other points of coincidence. A European feels forcibly the fatigue and weariness occasioned by the excessively numerous forms through which they had gone; at some of which, on the occasion alluded to (though intended only for ladies), I was present, through the kind influence of the resident's lady.

It is customary in China for sons after their marriage to live in their father's house with their wives and families. The two words in ordinary use to denote marriage are composed of the characters which signify "maiden and dusk," because the bridegroom goes, according to ancient usage, in the evening to receive his bride; and of "maiden and cause," because the bridegroom's coming in the evening is the *cause* of the bride's going to her husband's house—that is, his father's. This custom is sometimes the source of inconveniently large households, which has given rise to singular practices, and to peculiarities in the code of ethics and ceremonies; such as that a brother and sister-in-law should not be

permitted to converse together, an ancient rule which would probably never have been adopted had the parties occupied separate abodes.

Poor parents who seek a wife for their sons, in addition to the ordinary motive of transmitting the family name to posterity, frequently calculate on the services of their daughter-in-law during their declining years and advancing infirmities; for as, on the same principle, their own daughters, immediately on their marriage, are located in other families, so they themselves would be destitute of female aid if not provided for by this means. The same custom has also given rise, among some rich families in the north of China, desirous of dispensing with it, to a practice as remote from true Chinese usage as it is opposed to European notions of delicacy and propriety: it is that of advertising for a husband for their daughter; and, curious enough, to set the matter beyond all doubt, and to show, as the circumstance undoubtedly does, that this is by no means an uncommon case among the wealthier classes of the community, though said to be confined to the north, a peculiar character is appropriated to this special purpose. The practice may perhaps chiefly refer to cases of an only daughter for whom a very tender affection subsists, or one whom, on other grounds, her parents wish to retain in the domestic circle; and therefore, while true to the Chinese principle of encouraging the multiplication of the species, and planting the heads of future generations beneath the parental roof, these ancient and venerated forms are sought to be accomplished without the usual sacrifices.

It is the usage in China not for ladies to bring dowries to their husbands, but for the husbands to pay an equiva-

lent to the wife's parents for her services, which are now to be transferred to her husband's relatives; hence the proverb, "If you can obtain a virtuous son-in-law, do not exact large sums of money." It is as obvious from this usage, as from the necessity of advertisement, that a son-in-law of equal rank would not readily be obtained on these conditions, while parents, to secure their objects, wish to surrender as little as possible of what is due to their station; so that, perchance, by advertising they might meet with an orphan youth who would not object to an asylum with his wife's friends. In matrimonial alliances great regard is had to the probability of harmony and peace between the two families; and care is taken to adjust the wealth of one to the literature of the other. A person possessed of literary fame may reasonably expect to obtain an alliance with a family distinguished for its respectability and wealth. But in such cases, on the old principle of a daughter-in-law living with her husband's parents, an incongruous elevation of a son to a union with a lady of superior manners necessarily brings his wife down to a level with the habits of his own family, perhaps poor and mean in its domestic establishment, though he himself may be distinguished by literary honours. Inconveniences arise from such inharmonious combinations, some of which are exemplified in the following story translated from a Chinese author.

"Chin-seih-kew, an inhabitant of Pe, was a son of the most celebrated person in the city, insomuch that one of its richest families looked up to his fame and hoped to form a matrimonial alliance with him. Chin had acquired literary honours, his ancestors had for many years been grave, studious scholars, who had travelled to im-

prove their learning, without any occurrence to cast a shadow over their good fame. Having changed his views (that is, from the scholastic to the domestic life), he met with a young lady who was filially pious and modest, whom he espoused for the purpose of securing posterity. Her nuptial presents and offerings were splendid in the extreme, and the attendants and horses very numerous, on account of which there was the more indignation at Seih-kew's poverty, and her father resolved to break off the negotiation; a resolution, however, to which his daughter would not accede. He was enraged, clothed her in the meanest apparel, and sent her home to her husband. Seih-kew never had a fire lighted, nor was her father very compassionate. One day, however, he sent an old domestic with a tray of provisions for his daughter. The female entering the door went up to the mother and said, 'My master has sent me to see whether the young lady be not hungered to death.' The girl was afraid, the mother was ashamed, and forced a laugh to conceal her embarrassment. The young lady selected from the dish some of the viands, and was about to place them before the mother; the servant stopped her, and said, 'It is improper. You yourself, a young lady, having entered the family of a stranger, are you about to exchange for a cup of warm or cold water our family's substance, to give it to an old woman without respectability or taste?' The mother was highly indignant, as her altered voice and countenance exemplified; while the servant would not be scolded with impunity. A mutual attack commenced, which caused such confusion and clamour as to attract Chin-kew's attention, who immediately came in to ascertain the cause of it. The result

was, he fell into a great rage, seized the old woman by the hair, slapped her face, and kicked her out of doors.

"The next day the father of the bride went to fetch his daughter home, who was unwilling to return with him. He came again on the day following with a retinue of attendants, who threatened by their vociferations to attack the establishment. The daughter took leave of her mother-in-law, by her own advice, ascended the chariot, and returned home with her father. Some days after, a messenger came imperiously to demand the marriage agreement, which the husband at the command of his mother gave up. While Chin-kew and his mother were looking forward to the father's return with maps of different provinces which he was then visiting in pursuance of his literary duties, the family of the bride's father were entertaining a friend from Se-gan,* who affirmed that he had been dead some time." This news, on reaching the family of the deceased, seems to have allayed for a season the domestic broils created by the untoward marriage; inasmuch as "the son was immediately despatched in search of his father's bones, that they might be suitably interred or kept in some safe deposit."

From this story, and the provision made by the laws against the practice, it would seem as though it were no uncommon occurrence in domestic feuds for the females to come to blows. Severe punishment is decreed against a woman who shall strike or maltreat her husband; but the husband's beating the wife, provided he does not maim or seriously injure her, is only to be considered in the light of wholesome discipline, of which the law takes no cognizance. The disadvantages under which the female sex, in

* The capital of the province of Shen-se.

comparison of the male, is placed by the laws of China, are seen in this,—that the same offence, committed with impunity by a man against his wife, would be punished most severely in the wife against her husband. Much has been said by foreigners about the polygamy of the Chinese; but even bigamy is not allowed by the law, which peremptorily decides that one wife only should be allowed, and that other females introduced are to be considered as concubines; nor would moral writers sanction a female of this latter class in the domestic establishment of a married man before his wife had attained the age of forty, without bearing children, and then only for the sake of a family, which it is presumed he would not otherwise have. From the simple narrative of the marriage ceremony, it will be seen to what degrading treatment women are subjected. The sex labours under similar disadvantages throughout the whole of its future career. The birth of a son is a source of gladness and delight, which excites the kindliest feelings of the husband towards his wife; that of a daughter, one of mingled disappointment and sorrow, not merely because hopes have been blighted, but because it is looked upon by the father as a calamitous occurrence, which is often a source of harsh treatment of the mother. The husband's relatives, too, may increase her troubles and greatly annoy her without any resource, except in the degrees of merit awarded to her in the scale of virtues by moral philosophers, who carefully estimate the value of patient forbearance under such circumstances of repeated provocation. Every thing on her part must be conducted with becoming gravity and humility, especially towards her husband, whatever may be his conduct to her. It was the ancient custom for a woman, three months pre-

vious to marriage, to be conducted to an altar dedicated to deceased ancestors, that she might be taught the *virtues* of a wife, which consist of chastity and obedience; the *words* of a wife, which should be of a soothing nature; the *manners* of a wife, which should be mild and amiable; and the *duties* of a wife, which then consisted chiefly in preparing silk and flax: the ceremony was concluded with sacrifices of fish and water-plants, which were offered as pledges of submission to her husband. Female infanticide, though denied by European writers, is a crime which certainly exists to a great extent, and arises out of the general degradation of the sex. Express reference is made to the fact in the writings of moralists; its existence is proved by the circumstance, that laws are specially framed to restrain the evil, which would hardly be the case if there were no such crime, and from the fact that some authors refer to its prevalence without any emotion of horror at so atrocious a deed. It being the custom of Chinese females, instead of the usual mode of accouchement, to be delivered while standing near a tub into which the child falls, it is peculiarly favourable to the extinction of the infant's life, under the pretext of performing the necessary ablutions. Perhaps it will be the most satisfactory to refer to principles the reverse of those generally prevalent in China, in favour of sparing the lives of infant females, as they are expounded in an essay against drowning daughters; the very title of which not only shows that the crime is punished, but also implies the usual mode adopted in executing it. Sometimes, indeed, they may be exposed in more retired localities on the banks of a river; but this will not take place in crowded districts, or in the neighbourhood of populous towns, much less can they be

expected to be seen on the great rivers or canals—the common medium of traffic throughout the empire. The remark, therefore, of some members of European embassies, that they had travelled through a great part of China, and had not seen an exposed infant, cannot weigh much against the express authority of native writers, and what is implied in the ancient and modern usage of treating the woman as scarcely responsible. So inconsistent are the sentiments of the Chinese on this subject, that in an ancient ode which represents, by contrast with the intelligence and rank of a boy, the degraded state of a girl, she is said to be destitute alike of evil and good; and the reason of the sentiment is explained to be, "that slavish submission being her highest praise, neither virtue nor vice can be attributed to her." The advices of moral writers, and the subjects of authors who record domestic manners, unfold fearful tales on the morality of families. No right-minded person would wish to attribute imaginary crimes to the Chinese; nor does it evince either wisdom or benevolence to ascribe virtues where truth requires that vices alone should be stated. Every one conversant with the detail of practices at home by lighter writers, who has also had the advantage of inspecting private manners, will be prepared, notwithstanding moral theories, to believe that crimes of the most flagrant character are perpetrated. What the state of such families may be, in which almost every vice noticed in the Scriptures is practised in detail, happily cannot even be conjectured by Europeans, but the aggregate of its misery may be considered as inconceivably appalling. Moral writers argue in favour of sparing infants, that as the females who are now wives and mothers have been indebted for their life to the *daughters* of men,

and are themselves *daughters*, without which there could be no mothers, it is peculiarly incumbent on them to spare their female children; especially as brutes, wild and domestic, care for and love their young ones.

It may seem surprising that with all the additional toils and privations of the married life in China, it should be so readily and generally preferred; and this feeling, which pervades all classes, is looked upon as honourable in all. Nay, so strongly is it characteristic of the nation, that the laws of the empire, on the principle that it is a boon, provide a punishment for the master of a slave who shall neglect to procure her a husband at the proper time if she desires one; on the other hand, if a daughter, from attachment to her parents, voluntarily chooses celibacy, to serve them as long as they live, the merit of such conduct is considered by moral writers to be of the highest kind: similar conduct in a female slave attached to her master is also highly honoured: but such acts must be uncontrolled by superior authority.

SECTION VII.

EDUCATION—LITERATURE—MEDICINE — BOTANY — NATURAL HISTORY— CONCLUDING REMARKS.

EDUCATION—the next topic which engages our attention in discussing the state of the Chinese—is a subject of great moment in the arrangements of the supreme government, who act on the principle that national rule can be safely based only on correct moral sentiments. To illustrate their sense of its importance, youth are early imbued with various principles inculcated in the sacred classics, consisting of the works of Confucius, Mencius, and other revered authorities, among which the holy edict of a late emperor on filial duty, paraphrased by an officer of rank, and a small treatise* on subjects suited to youth, are highly valued. The following sentence from the tract for youth forms the ground-work of Chinese ethics: "In ancient times children were taught to sprinkle water on the floor and sweep it, to answer properly when called, to enter and retire according to due forms, to love their parents, reverence their superiors, honour their teachers, and associate with good people; all which are fundamental principles in promoting personal virtue, regulating families, ruling an empire, and subjugating the world." Education appears to have been greatly esteemed in high antiquity, since a chapter of a work on rites and cere-

* Seaou-heo, learning for youth.

monies, written five hundred years anterior to the Christian æra, speaks of the *ancient* mode of learning, which ordained that a few families should unite to have a school-room by the side of the gate; and that a neighbourhood, a village, a nation, and principality, should each have institutions for learning, varying in extent and importance according to the necessities of the district. Children, agreeably to the primitive custom, should be taught as soon as they can eat and speak; and as they are necessarily without judgment and experience, maxims and essentials should daily be laid before their eyes, occupy their ears, and fill their minds. The avowed object of the sages in teaching children so early, is to restrain their propensity to dissipation, and cherish benevolent dispositions. Moral virtue, according to their theory, is indeed the ultimate end of all instruction; while propriety of behaviour, music, archery, the art of driving a chariot, writing, and arithmetic, are considered as the external ornaments of an educated mind, and as comprehending the fine arts, the last of which should be taught at six years of age. There are no respectable public academies for the middle ranks of society similar to the higher schools of European nations; but as a substitute, the wealthier classes of the Chinese employ private tutors in their families for their children and other relatives. The only public institutions in China, for instructing youth, are the common district schools, at which fees and entrance money are paid, and the collegiate establishments of the province.

The mode of teaching boys in the common schools, is to begin with a small work called the "Classic of Three Characters," which they commit to memory, and having

gone through it two or three times for the sake of perfecting themselves in the sounds of the characters, they then proceed to the "four books," with a comment, the text of which they, in like manner, learn *memoriter*. It is only books on moral subjects that are taught in the seats of learning; and these not only have nothing in them tending, in the slightest degree, to corrupt the minds or morals of youth, but, on the contrary, as will be seen by reference to the philosophy of Confucius, insist on every thing which human authority can command to evince filial reverence, fraternal affection, submission to superiors, and obedience to the laws. Beyond, however, the unvarying and uninteresting course prescribed by Confucius, and two or three of his most distinguished disciples in their sententious ethics, there is nothing calculated to expand the mind, or attract the finer feelings of the heart; and yet learning is defined to be "a new perception," "the awakening of the mind to comprehend new objects."

In a treatise designated "An entire collection of Family Jewels," a hundred rules are laid down for the regulation of a school, which chiefly refer to the *conduct* of the scholars, who, on entering school in the morning, and leaving it in the evening, are ordered to bow first to the image of Confucius, and then to the master. When they return home, they are to bow, to the household gods, to the tablets of ancestors, to parents and relatives, and to the guests of the family who may happen to be present, to whom they must also utter a complimentary salutation. But although the majority of the rules relate to the behaviour of pupils during school hours, and at home, there are some that require them to pay great attention,

to understand clearly the sense of the authors read, to know all the tones and accents, and changes of signification of which a character is susceptible, from its relative position; and others that great care be taken to make a practical application of what is learned. An ode, or a selection from history, must be recited before the breaking up of the school in the evening, and such a piece be chosen as will be most likely to affect the feelings, and produce a salutary impression on the mind. In the winter, boys are to study at home by the aid of a lamp; and, though allowed relaxation during the hot months of summer, they must resume their reading again in autumn, when the weather becomes cool. Gravity of deportment, a tranquil and easy manner, self-command, a plain and simple dress, and correct speech, are strongly recommended; while the most distant approach to low language is peremptorily forbidden. Rules for sitting, standing, walking, talking, and bowing, are laid down, with the greatest precision. Scholars are prohibited from gambling, dice, cards, chess, footballs, flying kites, shuttlecock, playing on wind instruments, training birds, beasts, fishes, or insects, all which amusements, it is said, dissipate the mind and debase the heart. The eye ought especially to be restrained from the sight of obscene stories, impure plays, novels, and indelicate songs. Eating and drinking are to be held in due subordination to moral science, on the maxims of Confucius, "the good man does not eat to satiety, and the student of moral philosophy ought not to be ashamed of bad food and bad clothes."

Obedience to the laws of the school and success in learning are rewarded by the praises of the master, and gifts of pencils and ink. The disobedient and lazy, who

neither write well nor learn their lessons accurately, are to be punished; first of all by being made to kneel down at their seats during the time a stick of incense is burning; then, if this private discipline does not reform them, they must be publicly disgraced, by being brought to kneel down at the door of the school; and finally, if that should fail, they must be flogged. The truth is, the discipline of the master is very severe, as full authority to punish is ceded to him by the boy's parents, with the only reserve that he shall not be maimed, or essentially injured. It is enjoined on schoolmasters, that they sedulously discharge their duties, and devote their whole time to their pupils, if they would secure the respect due to their station. In this system the total want of discipline suited to improve the mental faculties, is lamentably obvious; and still it is surprising what attention is paid to etiquette, and the formation of the moral powers according to the mould prepared for them in antiquity. Were the same degree of attention devoted to the cultivation of useful branches of science, what prodigious results would accrue to so numerous a people, whose minds would then soon become, as they express the idea, "saturated with useful knowledge."

The national district schools, intended for graduates of the lowest rank,* are so ill conducted, that until the period of public examination arrives they are seldom or never attended. Public examinations, preparatory to the attainment of degrees, were instituted during the dynasty Tang, for the purpose of selecting persons to fill the offices of government, the principle of which, with slight modification, continues to the present day. It is not the

* The sew-tsae.

object of the government to create classes of learned men who shall enlarge the boundaries of human knowledge, and, consequently, extend the empire of mind; but only to impart the few general principles and maxims already possessed to talented men who will faithfully employ them in ruling the mass of the people, according to the favourite adage, "the man who seeks extensive learning must study ancient principles." To this end the government prescribes what books are to be studied, which consist only of those friendly to despotic principles; forbids the reading and writing of all others supposed to be adverse to its rights; and disallows all innovations but such as originate with itself, which being of imperceptible progress, and confined to the modification of a few elementary moral truths propagated by the ancients, discoveries in science and increase of useful knowledge are forcibly obstructed; and hence an entire stagnation of mental power, otherwise sufficient to have created incalculable resources of improvement, must continue to curse the largest and fairest portion of the globe, until either a revolution takes place in the government, or, despite its opposition, Christian principles in their primitive purity, and the latest improvements in science and literature, are introduced from without. There is in the Morrison Library, University College, an *index expurgatorius*, containing a list of books suitable to be read, beyond which the subjects of his imperial majesty must not presume to pry. The obscene character of a large number of printed works in Chinese is no doubt sufficiently flagrant to awaken the paternal sympathies of the august parent on behalf of so very numerous a progeny, and may afford a decent pretext, under the shelter of zeal

for Confucian philosophy, to restrict the liberty of the press.

The national literary examination of those who have attained the lowest degree, takes place in each district once in three years, and is conducted by its own magistrates and *literati* in the eighth month of the first, fourth, seventh, and ninth of every twelve years. The general examination of recommended persons, those of the second degree from every province of the empire, must take place at Peking on the fifth and eleventh, the second and eighth of every twelve years. All the candidates must enter the court yard to have their names enrolled in the list on the day preceding the examination, and remain until the day after it is over, so that they have to pass two nights without regular rest or food; and when death occurs, which is not infrequent, the body must be conveyed out of the area through a hole dug for the purpose in the wall, to avoid the infelicity of defiling the imperial gateway with a corpse. None are admitted as candidates for this degree but those who have attained the first, which is conferred at the district college by the resident provincial principal. The triennial examinations of whole provinces are conducted by two imperial commissioners sent for the express purpose from court. There are two other degrees, the Tsin-sze and Han-lin, which are conferred in the capital, the last in the presence of the emperor. The prize essays of these examinations, together with letters addressed to celebrated persons, constitute a large portion of the literature of China, and are distinguished into *essays in prose*, and *poetical compositions*, on political or moral subjects. The first species, which consists of an exposition of a sentence taken from

the sacred books of the sect of the learned—either the "four books" or the "five classics"—is the most important. To initiate youth into the literary profession, or train them to become officers of government, small works are put into their hands on the principles of composition. In one, called the "Bright Mirror of youthful Learning," the subject is divided into sections, designated beginning, middle, closing, and connective; in another the following four rules are laid down: to understand well the theme; to give it expansive power, that is, to delineate its external form accurately, that life and energy may be easily infused into it; to study good models; and to have respect to the period when divine principles become melted and blended with the soul like metals fused in a furnace. Other authors direct persons of a polite and liberal education, who have been introduced into the park of great elegance, carefully to study the classics and general history for the improvement of the understanding; to accustom themselves to horsemanship and archery, to strengthen the constitution; to make a tour of mountains and rivers, to brighten their genius; and to recite poetry and sing songs, in order to harmonize and tranquillize the spirit.

The following extract, from an introduction to the literary essays, will furnish a fair specimen of the subject-matter of these compositions.

"The male and female powers are the unfathomable principles of universal renovation. By the transforming influence of the sages, instruction is founded in reason, which, as the basis of all things, unites the changes of Heaven with truth, and conceals their uses; because that which walks in the footsteps of the sages' instruction

alone is god. To speak of greatness: How splendid are the heavens! which display not only the sun and moon, but the stars and constellations, with the whole circle of celestial phenomena; the voices of which are heard in the thunder, while the dews and moistures, zephyrs and rains, silently proclaim the undeviating rectitude of the seasons. How beautiful is the earth! sustaining not only herbs and trees, but mountains and hills, rivers and seas, divided into orders, according to the six breaths,* which in silence produce all things.

"Sages unfold material objects, perfect affairs, and imitate heaven and earth's silent system of annihilation and reproduction, which alternately prevails. The sublimity of infinite sincerity, cherished from the smallest beginnings, proceeds through the heart which is saturated with it, to perfect itself in infinite greatness; and is employed by the gods to preserve the golden medium of the universe. The sages alone fully comprehend this virtue. The common people practise it without understanding its nature. Emperors and princes, with their seven songs, answer to the renovating influences of a pure river.

"Wandering spirits which defile the age are regarded as demons or dragons. From a water mansion proceeds a heavenly palace; from a petty kingdom is derived an emperor's throne. Perhaps a faithful minister, a dutiful son, and a just scholar, are able to pass from obscurity into splendour, to reform flagrant evils, and promote the practice of virtue. Great leaders adopt benevolence and tenderness as their rule. With uprightness and generosity they supply the deficiency of heaven and

* The four points of the compass, and zenith, and nadir.

earth's renovating influences, and avert the ruin of ancient and modern instruction, embracing the greatest and sifting the smallest matters. The retired scholar diffuses his fame and flourishes, but the gate of the splendid and opulent is of short duration: this is the constant law of human nature."

The Chinese think no gentleman's education is complete without travelling to visit the most remarkable regions, lakes, and mountains, in their own empire, to which allusions are constantly made in their lighter compositions, and for whose guidance they have a specific directory; no admission, however, is made of the benefit that would accrue from a visit to foreign countries, in the removal of prejudice and the illumination of the mind. These two divisions, prose and poetry, embrace what is required of candidates for the highest literary degree, from whom persons are to be selected to rule the empire. The ancient literature of China, her histories, moral philosophy, and ceremonies, having already passed under review, her lighter literature and physical theories are to be discussed in this chapter. These subjects, divided generally into prose and poetry, will consist chiefly of historical novels and domestic histories. It is important to have access to a considerable portion of the literature of a country whose shores pertinaciously refuse hospitality to strangers, and therefore render it difficult to learn existing customs and manners from living forms of familiar intercourse. The works of highest repute, including both poetry and prose, are the five ancient classics, which, though they treat only of political and moral theories, are yet invested with the most sacred character. The circumstances that considerably augment

their value in the estimation of the people are their great antiquity, and the prohibition of the right of authorship, whereby the literature already in existence is constituted by the government the impassable barrier of supreme excellence.

In every respect, the sentiments spread throughout Chinese writings are of a very meagre character, embracing the narrowest range of subjects most unphilosophically discussed. The principal attraction to Europeans, in their most popular authors, must be their modes of illustration, and of carrying on intercourse between minds of varied powers and attainments, and the descriptions furnished of their domestic manners and daily habits of life. Histories, which in all countries form an attractive subject, are rendered readable in China chiefly by the fictions with which they are interspersed; which, on the other hand, as they divest such writings of all authenticity, render them unworthy of the name they bear.

Mere chronological statements of names and events, unaccompanied by any improving disquisition on character, or aid from collateral subjects of science and art, but containing minute references to hills and dales, tombs and mansions, scenes of civil discord or foreign conflict, create an interest in the minds of natives with which Europeans have no sympathy. If, as it is alleged, treatises on habits and manners originated in the commands of a sovereign, who could not himself mix with the people, but desired to understand their modes of life, it may be supposed the chief point of attention would be to delineate their actual condition, unless fiction were resorted to for the sake of impressing his majesty with false notions of the happiness of his subjects, which would then be described

to suit his tastes; and, therefore, though it failed to delineate real life, would at least teach wherein, according to Chinese opinions, its real comforts consisted.

As an unvarnished history of human nature in its best estate is pregnant with ills and disquietudes, those writers in all countries, whether situated in tropical, temperate, or polar regions, and distinguished by Paganism or Christianity, who have wished to give alluring descriptions of humanity, have been constrained to draw largely on the resources of the imagination, to feign a state which had no real existence, but which was imagined to be one of unmingled felicity. The scenes of moral and physical evil, which are depicted with disgusting minuteness in many Chinese works, give a fearful impression of the reality of the picture drawn, while the corrupting influence of the writer's loathsome details, which professedly discountenance vice, is a striking set-off against the lessons of morality inculcated in other authors. The most impure of these productions are generally couched under some figurative title, which conveys no idea of their real character.

In the century before the Christian æra, the emperor Seuen-te, of the Han dynasty, summoned classical scholars from various parts of the empire, to discourse on the harmonies and discrepancies of the ancient classics; and hence persons were regularly inducted to the office of serving classic feasts to the emperor. Prior to this time, for many ages, no one was permanently appointed to such employment, but the emperor called on whom he pleased to read and explain ancient authors to him.

Princes and rulers have ever affected great love for learning, and, to a certain extent, patronized erudite per-

sons, more especially those who were venerable for years as well as acquirements. In the eighth century of our æra, an institution, designated the "Hall for the elegant and correct Composition of Books," had its name changed to the "Hall of Assembled Worthies," from whom an emperor of the Tang dynasty daily selected an aged scholar to read to him. The ancient classics have always been held in deep veneration by the superior classes of Chinese society, on account, no doubt, of the patronage bestowed by government on those records of olden times. The title "learned scholar," is applied, with other descriptive epithets, to some of the first ministers of the sovereign, who were appointed to lecture in his hearing on disputed passages in the classics.

In the seventh century of our æra, learned persons were sought by the emperor to write his official edicts, who obtained the title of "northern gate literati," in consequence of their waiting at that gate to receive their summons to the imperial presence. About a hundred years later the "hall of a pencil forest"* was instituted; that is, a college of learned men was founded by Yuen-tsung, to be prepared whenever the emperor should interrogate them on literature and language. The members of this national institute are deputed, in various ways, to communicate the imperial will by means of official documents; and to superintend the composition of historical and statistical works; some of whom compile and publish books, for which others collate manuscripts, and collect materials.

There are several other departments assigned to different members, some of whom prepare a form of prayer

* See page 223, for the political objects of this establishment.

to be recited on public occasions, on a day which the astronomical board selects as felicitous. In the same century (the seventh) a college was established for the sons and brothers of the Mung-koo Tartars. The title of the superintendent—"the pourer out of a libation in sacrifice amongst the sons of the nation,"—was taken from the ancient practice previously alluded to, of pouring out a libation on the earth, to which it was offered, as the source of human nutriment.* The sons and grandsons of courtiers have studied in this institution. Students from Corea, and other places on the frontiers of China, have been members of it: at one period of its history as many as eight thousand were residents at the same time. Several of the tutors had a comprehensive acquaintance, it is said, with ancient and modern history; some understood music, others attended to general literature, and the rest were taught the science of numbers.

There are separate schools for youth between ten and twenty years of age, where the collateral branches of the imperial family are taught Manchow Tartar and Chinese literature, with horsemanship and archery. These two last are indispensable; for as the present dynasty obtained the empire by the sword and the bow, it ordains the same means to be used for the preservation of it.

It is the custom of an editor, when a work is re-published in China, not to dedicate it to a patron, but to introduce it to the world under the auspices of a well-written preface, from the pen of some official personage or influential friend. Of these prefaces some are valuable only from the rank and title of the writers, the highest order of whom is imperial majesty, who condescends occa-

* See page 274.

sionally to use the vermilion pencil to write a royal preface; a page or two, therefore, in the beginning of a work written in red ink, is always an imperial production. To standard works there are frequently several prefaces, written with different degrees of ability, which are valuable not only for the style, but because they contain the germ of sentiments embodied in the treatises to which they are prefixed.

The following extract is selected, both as a specimen of the manner in which publishers compliment themselves, and because it belongs to a work especially designed for youth, entitled, "Drawings and Descriptions of Trees of the Bamboo species." The contents are distributed into eight classes:—drawings in pencil; flowers in ink; fruit families; peacocks' feathers; the *epidendrum* family of the class *gynandria;* the reed family; the plum family; and the stone family, that is, minerals. These several topics are sufficiently miscellaneous to raise a question on the propriety of their order, and the singularity of the arrangement of minerals with botany; but this is common with the Chinese. My object in translating the following preface is to illustrate their mode of publication.

"This collection has been prepared from the laborious researches of preceding sages, out of the abundant supplies of the universe, and consists of plants, peacocks' feathers, trees, and minerals. Each substance being intelligibly distinguished, accurately drawn, and graphically described, constitutes this work the scholar's golden needle (in allusion to the needle of the mariner's compass); and the precious raft of the literati (in reference to an immense ship, of which tradition has preserved a memorial, pro-

bably Noah's ark). The original blocks on which the work was stereotyped, had been used so long that the divine periods were almost obliterated: a calamity of such a nature as to cause the student to look to the fathomless abyss, and deeply sigh. Happily, the garden store-house of blocks existed, where original genealogical records of successive generations may still be seen; and here a carefully revised new edition was put to press; (literally, put to the date and the pear-trees, of the wood of which the blocks for printing in China is made); so that, like a cottage on the brow of a mountain, the eye will not be obscured with clouds and smoke, while the mind dwells with delight on the production with which former sages felicitated and blessed future scholars."

The following dialogue, between Confucius and an inquirer after truth, forms an introduction to the She-king, the ancient standard of Chinese poetry; I have, therefore, translated it to give the views of the sage on this department of literature; and more especially as, with the succeeding remarks from the same work, it presents a correct outline of Chinese poetry at the present day.

"When Confucius was asked what originated poetry, he replied, Man was born in perfect stillness, which is the essence of heaven; but as he came in contact with material objects, the desires of his nature began to operate. Now, since he has desires, he cannot but think; and where thoughts are cherished, there must necessarily be words. If words do not exhaust the thoughts, the subject of them must have recourse to sighs and groans. If these prove insufficient, he must resort to the vocal sounds peculiar to his species: this is the origin of poetry.

If this be the case, then, how is the art of poetry taught? Poetry is the embodying in words the influence which man exercises over things; and as the mind may have a good or bad influence, so the figure of that influence, delineated in words, may be right or wrong.

"The sages, who constitute the highest class of human beings, cannot be wrong, and hence their words are adequate sources of perfect instruction. The blending of their influence with their doctrine renders it impossible to be other than of the selectest kind. Superior men must think of the means by which they will turn round upon themselves; and hence, from admonition and correction, methodical instruction is derived. From the time of Chow-shing's unenclosed places for sacrifice, temples, and courts, down to districts, villages, clans, and lanes, oral instruction, pure and unmixed, has wholly proceeded from perfect rectitude. The sages, indeed, have harmonized the laws of sound, by which the inhabitants of districts, provinces, and nations have sought to renovate the world.

"With regard to the odes produced in eminent states, the emperor is their guardian, who also arranges their order, investigates their nature, and fixes the canon of promotion and degradation. Passing over the intervening ages, we come to the times of Confucius, who when in a retired station, without power to act, exhort, degrade, or promote, revised the tablets on which the statistics of his countrymen were inscribed. He removed their redundancies and corrected their discrepancies; but this effort failing of success, he had them engraven and left them; an act which has caused his revisions never to be forgotten in all subsequent ages.

"He employed philosophers and scholars, and investi-

gated their attainments and deficiencies, that he might imitate the virtuous and reform the unworthy; therefore, although his government was not sufficiently powerful to flourish for one season, his instructions have really been perpetuated throughout all subsequent generations. If this be the case then, remarked the inquirer, poetry must be an equally available medium of communicating instruction. The sage replied, Certainly. Its principal divisions are three:—the first is *fung*, which consists of the ballads and songs of villagers made by themselves, and sung by males and females who mutually give utterance to their peculiar feelings in alternate responses.

"In the state Chow, those who had been renovated by Wan-wang's* influence, were summoned to the south, to perfect their virtues, where all had an opportunity of attaining the rectitude of their dispositions and feelings, which, when displayed in words, must not degenerate into lasciviousness, if their strain be joyful; nor be injuriously indulged if it be sorrowful; therefore these two points alone constitute the correct classical odes of the national air—*fung*. From that period to later ages, as among the states there was good and bad government, so there were virtuous and unworthy subjects; and the manifestation of these influences discovered the difference which subsists between rectitude and depravity; hence what were called the popular ballads of former kings—the *fung*—underwent a complete change.

"With regard to the *ya* and *sung*, they also were originated in the age of Chow, and consist of songs set to music and sung at the court, the national sacrifices, and the temples. The language in which they were composed

* An ancient prince eminent for virtue.

was harmonious and grave; the sentiments they expressed were liberal and delicate, always composed by the disciples of the sages, and became the unchangeable models of ten thousand ages. The alterations that have occurred to the *ya* were effected by the customs of good and worthy men in times of grief and sickness, which the sages adopted: the *heart* evinced fidelity, respect, commiseration, and constancy; the *ideas*, promotion of virtue and suppression of vice. Moreover, in all future ages, these odes have formed the unrivalled classical standard; since they contain every principle necessary to enrich human affairs below, and elucidate the ways of heaven above. How then are they to be studied? The authors of them sought out and blended together the original principles of our nature. The confederated* states adapted them to the varying circumstances of their political condition; corrected them by the *ya*, in order to enlarge their influence, and harmonized them by the *sung*, in order to define their limits; this constitutes the great principle of studying poetry. From this proceeded sections and passages to connect them generally, and explanations and elucidations to arrange them separately. Poetry is chanted, in order to illumine it; enriched, in order to consolidate it. The examination of it discloses the secret springs of the disposition, the discrimination of it is the hinge on which the words and actions begin to turn; and then the cultivation of personal and domestic virtues, peace and equity, prevail throughout the empire, which do not require to be sought by any other means. The inquirer expressed his approbation and withdrew."

* The Chinese term applied to individuals denotes eminence in learning and virtue. See page 215 of this work.

The nature and uses of poetry are further explained in the same work:—"Poetry is the natural tendency of the human will which resides in the heart. Its essence consists in internal excitement; its external form in suitable expressions, which, aided by sighs and groans, broke out into eternal songs, which were still found insufficient to express the emotions of the soul even before posture-making and dancing were discovered as its ultimate requirements. The inward workings of the animal nature, in other words the seven passions—joy, anger, grief, fear, love, hatred, and desire—displayed in sounds, which by cultivation became musical, were the true sources of the influence poetry obtained in ruling over the world. If these sounds were peaceful and joyful, they indicated the prosperity of the government; if resentful and acrimonious, its perversity; but if marked by grief and commiseration, then they proclaimed the lost state of the nation. As the passions differ in their nature, so also must the notes of music, which are clear and thick, high and low, swift and slow, and open (or coarse), mutually responding in harmony; wherefore, in adjusting your affairs of profit and loss, influencing demons and gods, and moving heaven and earth, there is nothing equal to poetry. For the recitation of odes in a musical tone impels the prosperous to the utmost point of harmony and peace, rouses the unfortunate to the highest pitch of anger and resentment, is sufficiently powerful to penetrate the elements of the two first principles,* to promote felicity and call down calamities. Since poetry proceeds from nature, and is not dependant on human strength, it pierces the deepest recesses of man, and penetrates his swiftest movements, to which no other

* Yin and Yang.

medium of instruction can reach. By poetry, former kings regulated matrimony, perfected filial piety, honoured the human relations, adorned the renovating influences of education, and changed national customs."

To comprehend the whole of these objects, three other divisions, called the woof (foo, pe, hing), are added to the warp (fung, ya, sung). According to native distinctions, the *foo*, which corrects and arranges the matter, the *pe*, which illustrates by comparisons, and the *hing*, that instructs by similitudes, are the means by which the elegance and graces of the three other divisions are displayed. These names seem to have been borrowed from notes in music, of which they still constitute a class, the first of which (fung) represents fifteen national airs, the second (ya) is divided into two parts, and the third (sung) into three; both which are also names of musical instruments. For how numerous soever musical compositions may be, their individual notes and united harmony are comprehended in these six divisions, in the knowledge of which, it is the duty of the teacher of music to instruct the sons of the nation, who will then be able without further aid to arrange each department in its proper order, and to recite poetical compositions with success.

The uses of poetry, according to these heads, are thus attained: "superiors, by odes, renovate inferiors; inferiors, by odes, satirize their superiors. The cultivation and criticisms of literature are without guile in their authors, and admonitory to their hearers, and hence they are called fung—'wind, air, influence'—an element from which the custom of reciting odes has been derived, and whose name they bear, because it is the property of the wind to move things in connection with sound. Where

royal doctrines decay, ceremonial rites become obsolete, and national instruction fails, then the government of states is subverted, the usages of families alienated, while the national airs and political harmonies are destroyed." The first of these three principal divisions would therefore seem to be national, the second political, the third moral and sacred; and the three subordinate ones, the different methods employed to elucidate each of them. By some writers the whole six divisions are characterized by the following properties: the first of the series, embodying the social and political principles of ancient sages; the second, simple statements of virtues and vices; the third, satirical allusions when the poet is afraid to attack openly; the fourth, metaphorical encomiums on those who are displeased with direct praises; the fifth, sentiments for the guidance of posterity; the sixth, praises of virtuous actions. But as the Chinese seldom adhere rigidly to the distinctions they create, I am inclined to the opinion of those writers who affirm that these different topics are intermingled in practice. In the She-king there are specimens of the varied subjects, but they are such wretched compositions, both for matter and melody, that after considerable research I could not satisfy myself with one worth transcribing; still it would be wrong to infer from thence that there are not occasionally touching sentiments of a tender or melancholy nature, or of an elevated and pleasing character.

There is nothing like epic poetry in this department of literature in China. Their poetical productions of a more modern date consist principally of popular songs, dramatic compositions, and the verses made at literary examinations already noticed.

The plays of the Yuen dynasty are many of them set to music, which is the principal production of the Chinese on an extensive scale. Some of the titles of other works are singular, as the "Broad-brimmed Old Gentleman, in ten songs," the subjects of which are distributed in the following order: "the tender, fragrant associate; seductive Eolian music; human volitions coinciding with supreme fate; the sea-monster at the threshold; the female phœnix seeking the male; Heaven's decree the only resource; the fish which compares eyes; the gem scratching the head; the affectionate union ingeniously completed; and elegant intercourse between the bride and the bridegroom."

These subjects contain allusions to their prevailing sentiments, as the Chinese student will perceive, which constitute their unfailing resources for all literary adventurers. There is only one more work in the Morrison Library that I will mention—the songs of the imperial harem—the literal title of which is, "The Great Music of the Nine Halls."

Female literature is not very prominent in China; but there are books to direct the conduct of females, if there are few written by females themselves. One of the former description, entitled "Sayings and Doings of Female Literature," comprises four things of importance incumbent upon a woman; these are: to put away selfishness, cultivate politeness, read books, and manage affairs; the four doctrines or principles connected with them are, serving her own parents, her husband's parents, her husband, and her children.

There is another work, designated "Memoirs of Celebrated Women," the edition of which before me was edited by the son of a late Governor of Canton; it contains

the names and deeds of certain eminent females, whose conduct has been handed down as a model to their sex, one of whom is Mencius's mother, who was praised for reproving her son's indolence, by cutting asunder the web which she was weaving, to show him that as it could never be completed without continued labour, so it was equally impossible to be a scholar without unwearied perseverance. The same lady is represented as setting her son right on the principles of politeness. Having one day taken offence at his wife for not being prepared in due form to receive him, he immediately determined to separate from her; but his mother told him there were duties of ceremony incumbent on the husband as well as the wife, and if he had entered her apartment with all the previous caution that was necessary, in scraping his shoes, coughing, and making other noises, his wife would have been forewarned of his approach, and he would not have caught her thus unprepared. He acknowledged his error, and continued to live with his wife.

Among a great number of light works, there is one called "An Evening's Conversation," which contains a variety of short stories on ghosts and other subjects. Others, with some mystic title, contain memoirs of passing occurrences or existing families. A celebrated novel, under the title of "Dreams of the Red Chamber," is a memoir of a wealthy family in Peking. Most of those with titles of a figurative or mystic nature conceal histories or anecdotes of particular persons. In works of great value the characters are numbered at the end of each section, the names of which are derived from the two first words of each, irrespective of the sense, in a manner similar to some of the books of the Hebrew Bible.

In tracing the theories of the Chinese on the art of healing, it will be convenient to divide them into the departments of medicine, surgery, and medical jurisprudence, preceded by a few remarks on the general system.

The original elements have relation to the five viscera, which the physician ought to be acquainted with before he can be a proficient in his own profession; since it is a knowledge of this theory which enables him, when feeling the pulse of his patients, to ascertain their state of health. It is well known that the Chinese carry the doctrine of the pulse to a very extravagant extent, and have pretended to discover symptoms of disease, where skilful European practitioners, examining the same patient, could discover no unusual indications. Such notions afford wide scope for trickery and deceit; and although they appear nonsensical to the more enlightened nations of the west, yet much real evil is thereby occasioned to the minds, bodies, and estates of vast masses of human beings.

The best medical works are arranged on the principle, that all parts of the material world are mutually connected, and that a person of acute discernment is able to trace the connection between the three original powers, heaven, earth, and man, and the constituent parts of the human frame; whence attempts are made to classify diseases according to the supposed influence of those overruling, all-controlling energies. The pulse, as it may be naturally supposed, has, in connection with such a subject, excited numerous speculations and called forth a variety of fanciful theories, the doctrine of which, together with the circulation of the blood, is supposed to have been known in high antiquity; and, singular enough, it is felt, to ascertain the fortune of a man, as well as the state of

his health. Medical practice proceeds on the principle that man is a small universe, a microcosm, and that the dual powers in nature must act in mutual combination and harmony, without excess or defect, to secure the healthiness of the human system. According to this theory, the two powers are supposed to operate on the female as well as the male, notwithstanding that she is usually classed with darkness and imperfection, and he with light and strength. The substances of the *materia medica* of the Chinese are all classed under one or other of the five elements, which, as it has been shown above, are connected with the five tastes and the five colours.

Some analogy doubtless subsists between the visible objects with which we are surrounded and the human frame; but it is more easy to draw out a fanciful system in theory, with no other guide but an ardent imagination, than to yield to a patient induction of facts, under the direction of chastened reason and an enlightened understanding. The idea of the Chinese is, that disease arises from a predominance or deficiency of the one or other of these five elements in the human frame; and hence superstitious notions and practices have an ample sphere of influence both with the patient and his professional advisers.

There have been principally four eminent writers on the art of medicine in China; one lived in the third century of the Christian æra, who wrote an original work on fever, which, in the judgment of the imperial college of physicians, was not indebted to any preceding publication for a single sentence. He was the originator of prescriptions, but erred in giving immoderately large doses of medicine. He is probably the first and greatest physician of the Chinese.

There is an ancient work which embodies the results of

certain consultations between two personages in high antiquity on splanchnology, and recognizes the doctrine of the circulation of the blood; but almost all medical works are introduced by reflections on the system of nature, and hence the difficulty of separating what is fanciful from what has some foundation in the nature of things, and in the analogies subsisting between them.

In selecting a work of first authority in China, as our text book on this subject, "The Golden Mirror of Medical Practice," published under the auspices of the Emperor Kéen-lung, claims attention. It contains the edicts of the emperor, commanding its publication under the superintendence of the ministers of state and the college of physicians, with the usual prefaces to each edition; the first in the fourth, and the last in the seventh year of his reign, to the effect that "the emperor has commanded all the courts of law to revise medical works for the cultivation of medical science. The ministers charged with carrying it into effect proclaim the duties entrusted to them with surpassing reverence and exultation; since the principles of medical knowledge had become obsolete, and the rules by which its ancient authorities were guarded had long ceased to exist. Moreover, because medical works had become adulterated, and the practice of medicine unknown, our imperial supreme emperor, with a holy, tender, and benevolent heart, regarding the people as his children, and desiring them altogether to ascend to old age's utmost limit, extended his virtuous purposes until they were unlimited as heaven; and since it was for the long life, and the public business of the people of ten thousand ages, the ministers of state immediately assembled together in the medical hall."

Then follow the names of the celebrated servants of the sovereign, preceding the treatises on the different subjects. The work itself consists of forty large volumes: six on injuries sustained by cold; four on the golden case (the chest); four containing celebrated prescriptions; three on affections of the heart; five on complaints more especially incident to females and youth; four on cutaneous diseases, especially the small-pox; six on surgery, with reference to the trunk, bones, limbs, and other members of the system; three on cauterizing; and four on the state of the air. A tonic prescription, or a dose of medicine for repairing the strength, is the first of a series of prescriptions in the "Mirror of Medical Practice." Boluses, pills, and powders, are the forms in which drugs are administered. Common salts have been long used; rhubarb and mercury have also been famous medicines for many ages. The first written prescriptions do not appear to reach higher than the third century of our æra, while the diseases enumerated chiefly refer to those which include fevers occasioned by colds.

Cutaneous eruptions of the severest kind are very common. Leprosy, at least that species of it which I have seen, is of a pure white, very common, and not, as far as I remember, of the copper-coloured spots usually referred to in European treatises, as symptomatic of this disease. From the heat of the climate and the irritation generated by other causes, it is no uncommon thing for limbs to be destroyed, and other parts of the body essentially injured by cutaneous diseases, which ere long terminate in death. From a variety of prescriptions, the following, with its comments, is selected as a specimen.

"The *jin-seng* and *foo-tsze* liquid. To regulate the

breath and blood of the Yin and Yang, let a dose of the *jin-seng* and *foo* (a medicinal herb) be taken, prepared with boiling water." In remarks on this, it is stated: "The former part of the body, when produced, is called the prior heaven; the latter, the subsequent heaven. The constitution of the first depends upon the kidneys, which are the gift of the father and mother; the constitution of the second depends upon the stomach, which is renovated by water and grain. The 'prior heaven' is the substance of the primary principles in nature pre-eminent for repose, and therefore the child enwrapped within the womb depends upon its mother's quietness for nourishment, and then in its living breath the divine concealment and secret springs of life will be tranquil. The subsequent heaven's breath is the *use* of the primary principles in nature, which is carried out in motion; therefore, after the nourishment of figure, water and grain are administered to it; and in the production of the body, the divine impulse is set in motion and begins to circulate; heaven and man unite their virtues. The two substrata, that is, motion and rest, are in mutual operation, whence the 'latter heaven's breath,' having obtained the 'former heaven's breath,' there is life, and where there is life there is no repose; but if the former heaven's breath obtains the latter, renovation commences; where there is renovation, there is no exhaustion. If, in motion or at rest, the kidneys are injured by want of care, the former heaven's breath will be empty: if eating and drinking be immoderate, the stomach will be injured, and the latter heaven's breath be empty. Now to supply this latter deficiency, there is nothing equal to the draft made from the two ingredients, *jin-seng* and *foo-tsze*. If the viscera are ever

so reduced, these medicines are esteemed of the first importance for quickly restoring the system to its wonted strength." Several other directions are given, for altering the prescription on the appearance of different symptoms, but with all the alterations, *jin-seng* is retained.

I give this quotation, not with the hope of illuminating the faculty in Europe on the subject of medical treatment, but to show the superstitious notions and childish practices adopted by the most eminent Chinese physicians, who, during a long succession of ages, have had every opportunity of improving physical science, which an extensive and populous country, yielding the natural productions of every variety of climate and soil, was adapted to supply.

The term applied by the Chinese to the physician's department, medicine, is *internal practice;* that used to describe surgery, *external practice.* The work from which the following abstract of surgery is taken, bears the designation "The Golden Mirror of External Practice." It treats principally of tumours, ulcers, and external eruptions in various parts of the human frame, beginning with the head, and proceeding in order throughout the body thus: The first class of tumours or ulcers especially belong to the head; under which are those of the brain, designated the organ of one hundred assemblies, because of its complicated nervous system; those which penetrate the brain, others contiguous to these but only on one side of the head, those which are found on the forehead and on either side; some produced at the corner of the right eye are designated male tumours; others, from their vicinity to the hair, are called hair tumours, whether at the top of the head or on the margin of the hair of either side; others, designated "heaven's tumours, peaked and poisonous,"

are found behind each ear, a protuberance of one inch and three-tenths in size, that is, in height from the skin; another, the "diamond pillow" tumour, upon the bone directly behind the head, designated by that name, situated four and a half inches behind the cavity of the brain; another, in shape like a cross piece of wood, called a brain "smelter or shaver;" another, called "oil and wind," is a sort of prurient ulcer, the symptoms of which are dried hair and the peeling off of the skin, bright red appearance with intolerable itching; the common name is "the demon head-shaver;" another on the face, which causes the skin to become dry and rub off; another called the "bald ulcer," of similar properties; another the "insect ulcer;" and finally the ulcer in the neck, at the root of the hair, to which corpulent persons are peculiarly liable: these are the definitions of the tumours which especially affect the head. In the same work, the second class embraces those which refer to the face; the third class, different shapes of tumours on the top of the head; the fourth, those which are peculiar to the back; the fifth, those which are found in the chest; and then others on the eye, nose, ear, mouth, lips, gums, lower extremities, armpit, ribs, and sinewy part of the muscles. Internal ulcers are such as affect the lungs; the viscera, large and small; the stomach, including the receptacle for the food and the coat; the liver, heart, kidneys; together with ulcers of the lower class. The subject is concluded with a discussion of the modes of treatment.

In a surgical work, entitled "Important Laws for Guiding the Needle and the Cauterizing Iron," which seems to have been brought from Japan, there are several rude outlines of the human frame, with a minute description of

each part. Although the work appears to have been printed at Japan, the knowledge it originally contained was, no doubt, carried from China.

The Chinese have terms in their language to express the art of cauterizing with caustic stones, and by hot iron; others show that they must have been early acquainted with methods for reducing the excrescences of the skin, to which they seem to have been anciently subjected. The ancient Hebrews, as we find from the Scriptures, and no doubt all the earlier nations, used stone, before the use of iron, or the mode of preparing it, was known. The surgical art is not likely in any of its departments to make great progress in China, until the notions of the people are corrected respecting the use of the body after death. Experiment, however, so far as it has been made, has proved that they are not very scrupulous about operations performed on the body while living, so long as they have the hope of thereby preserving life and promoting health.

There are numerous points, of great interest to Europeans, in the character of the Chinese, beyond that of other Oriental nations, and one is their resolute opposition to the trammels of religious superstition. That they have their superstitions has already been shown; but they are not like those of the Hindoos, than whom the Chinese are generally much more business-like in their habits, and would much more readily yield to proposals made for their general welfare, than a people trained up from infancy in terror of the priesthood, and implicit obedience to the least expression of its will.

With regard to *medical jurisprudence*, an extract from a work, bearing the title "Records of Washing away Injuries," that is, taking ample revenge for cruelties inflicted,

will give a brief view of the system adopted by the Chinese. It evidently originated in the conviction that if the law did not provide for the satisfaction of persons who had lost relatives by a violent death, the survivors would take the responsibility of inflicting summary punishment on the offenders. The details of the law, which, as usual, are extremely minute, are introduced in the following manner:—

"There is no affair of greater moment than the preservation of human life; nor any punishment more awful than that of death, to which every murderer exposes himself without hope of pardon. He who fails to administer the due proportion of punishment can never enjoy tranquillity of mind; and hence, to assist in prosecutions and to determine punishments, complete evidence that fatal injuries have been inflicted on the body must be obtained by official examinations. This being done, the sentence must be passed, and the just retribution of life for life exacted. If you cause those who know the law to fear it, the people will seldom transgress, and many lives will thereby be preserved. But if official examinations be incomplete, satisfaction for the dead will not be obtained; and should satisfaction of the living be procured by the sacrifice of two or three lives for one, enmity and revenge will mutually succeed, and who can tell where the calamity will end? Those who have received injury, where its fatal effects are not immediate, ought before death to make a deposition in the presence of the magistrate, that he himself may immediately, by examination, elucidate the nature of the injury, its locality, and importance; and a time must then be fixed by the coroner and physician within which it may be hoped health will be restored.

But if death ensues, another examination must forthwith take place, and the result be recorded, that the barbarous practice of breaking open and examining the body may be prevented.

"In the destruction of life by violence, there should be an inquest on the body without delay, before any change takes place by decomposition; when the wounds, whether slight or severe, larger or smaller, will be easily determined, and the decision pronounced according to law. If delay takes place, the body will be disordered, and the flesh dissolved, so that there will be danger lest the truth should be sacrificed; and thus the first object of human life will be perverted. An official person, who performs the necessary offices to a corpse, and stimulates the confederates of the guilty party to a violation of the orders prescribed, renders it difficult to ascertain the path of duty. In conducting examinations of the body as soon as it is dead, first examine the middle of the neck at the back part, then the roots of the hair, then the orifices of the ear, then the nostrils, then the windpipe, and every place where there is ingress or egress for any thing.

"Be apprehensive and guard against issuing summonses and warrants without any cause, and afterwards investigate the whole body. If there really ought to be an examination, then, before proceeding to institute it, inquire with great strictness into the testimony of relatives and neighbours concerning the murder, commanding them to state, unequivocally, where and by what weapon the wound was inflicted, and to establish clearly their accusation. Then forthwith the relatives, the governor, the magistrate, and the coroner, shall bring together the plaintiff and defendant, to the place where the body is laid, and

according to law examine them, and announce the decision, determining by what wound the important injury affecting life was produced; whether it appeared in the flesh or in the trunk, the back, the upper or lower extremities of the body; whether it had broken or entered the bones, or whether there was a discoloration, livid, scarlet, yellow, or black; whether the wound was round, long or short, large or small; whether inflicted by the hands, feet, or any other means; whether the murderous weapon was light or heavy, new or old, and when compared with the size of the wound how it corresponds in each particular. The body being investigated, let the next of kin with his own hand write out a full account; do not employ the hand of a stranger.

"Do not let the officers on any account, from dislike of the effluvia which may arise from the body, occupy a high and distant position, the smoke of incense and the fragrant partition,* bearing to hear the coroner's proclamation, while the inferior officers write, in order to conceal what is important, and announce what is trivial, to diminish the much and increase the little. Moreover, when a man has hung himself, cut his throat, or swallowed poison, been burned, or drowned, all the different causes of death must be carefully investigated, examined, and deliberated upon, each circumstance offered up and submitted to form a trustworthy case. But if such measures be not adopted, then the coroner, and the subordinate officers, will invent vicious and spurious documents; and after the official examination, the murderer's artful and specious defence, the accusations of the relatives, the

* Referring to the screen or wall which separates the officer from the body.

discord sown by official litigants, the grasping extortion of swindlers, each will cause cases to be made out with difficulty, and to nullify official examinations—they will boil the body and scrape the bones. And as for the dead, the cruelties they have met with remain unavenged, and the living are implicated in intolerable crimes, all which arise from the want of promptness and sincerity in official inquests.

" In all inquiries of a very difficult and doubtful character, it will be necessary to pursue the examinations more extensively, and almost without interruption, since during the time within which a person dies from fighting, the wounds and injuries are not manifest. If there are the symptoms of disease, employ the remedies of the physician's and magician's art to cure it, because many die on account of sickness; but if you do not inquire into the facts, how can you know? Inquiries, however, ought not altogether to depend on one man; and they ought to be skilfully conducted; if not, you will frequently be the subject of gross imposition."

I have translated thus far from this work to show the care with which the Chinese government professes to administer equal justice among the people, but it must never be forgotten that their records and their acts differ *toto cælo;* and that what, in writing, assumes the appearance of equity, founded on a common sense view of matters, frequently in practice exhibits the grossest tyranny and oppression.

In entering on the notice of botany, which must be very brief, it may be well to premise that the system submitted to the reader's notice is drawn from a work acknowledged to be the best authority on this subject, and

entitled an "Index of Original Herbs." It is introduced with classes of metals, precious stones, minerals, salts, and petrifactions, and concludes with several species of animals, insects, birds, fishes, reptiles, and man. The divisions of each subject are three: *classes*, *orders*, and *species*; of the first there are sixteen, of the second sixty-two, of the third 1,871. As my object is to show the general manner in which the Chinese treat subjects of this nature, I will take from this work specimens on each topic as it proceeds. The volumes which immediately follow the general index contain a list of drugs for all the various diseases of the human frame, which are divided into two classes; and these are again subdivided to correspond with the five elements, which the reader will recognize as the basis of the material universe.

The first is the *water* class, divided into two orders, *heavenly* and *earthly*, the former of which has thirteen, the latter thirty species; the second is the *fire* class, which comprehends eleven species; the third is the *earth* class, which has sixty species; the fourth the metal and stone class, of which there are five *orders:* 1, metals containing twenty-eight species; 2, precious stones, fourteen species; 3, stones of the first division, thirty-two species; 4, of the second division, thirty-nine species; 5, natural salt, twenty species, with a supplementary addition of twenty more. The metals and stones, fossils and minerals, include vermilion, quicksilver, orpiment, a medicinal mineral (hwa shih), stones of the five original colours—white, red, green, black, and yellow—charcoal-wood, stones in wells and springs, stalactites, variegated stones, asphaltum, coal, lime, the magnet (literally the

affectionate stone), diamonds, petrified crabs, serpents, silkworms, swallows, and tortoises—and thunderbolts. The different kinds of salt enumerated are sea-salt, salt from ponds, rock-salt, salt from wells, crystallizations, natural salt, and manufactured salt.

Of the botanical division, the first class—herbs—includes eleven orders: 1, "mountain plants," which has seventy species; 2, "fragrant plants," fifty-six species; 3, "marshy plants," one hundred and twenty species; 4, "poisonous plants," or those whose use is attended with danger, forty-seven species; 5, "scandent plants," those which want support, ninety-two species; 6, "water plants," twenty-two species; 7, "stone plants," such as grow on stones or rocks—house-leek and ferns—nineteen species; 8, mosses and lichens, sixteen species; 9, "miscellaneous plants," nine species, to which are added the names of one hundred and fifty-three species that have not yet been used. The second class—grain—includes four orders: 1, hemp, wheat, and paddy, which comprise twelve species; 2, maize, which includes eighteen species; 3, leguminous plants, having fourteen species; 4, kinds of grain capable of fermentation, or plants from which wines and other liquors are extracted, comprising twenty-nine species. The third class, "herbaceous plants," of five orders: 1, pungent and bitter, which have a strong taste or smell, comprising thirty-two species; 2, such as are of soft, mucilaginous quality, comprising forty-one species; 3, plants producing fruit on the ground, comprising eleven species; 4, edible water plants, comprising six classes; 5, *fungi*, such as agarick, mushroom, toad-stool, and others, containing thirteen species. The fourth class—fruits—comprehends six orders: 1, the five fruits—peach,

apricot, white bramble, and different sorts of the plum, of which there are eleven species; 2, mountain fruits, such as are uncultivated, comprising thirty-four species; 3, foreign fruits, comprising thirty-two species; 4, aromatic fruits, including thirteen species; 5, fruits which grow on the ground and have no kernels, of which there are nine species; 6, water fruits, such as the water-lily, root and seeds, including six species, to which twenty-three have been added. The fifth class, "trees," comprehends six orders: 1, odoriferous woods, of thirty-five species, such as the pine, larch, cassia, rose, magnolia, myrrh, cloves, sandal wood, cedar, camphor, benzoin, assafœtida, aloes, and others; 2, tall-stemmed trees, including fifty-two species, as varnish-trees, sterculia, willow, tamarisk; 3, luxuriant trees, which grow freely, such as the mulberry, calycanthus, and others, of which there are fifty species; 4, parasitic plants, of which there are eleven species; 5, flexible plants, such as the bamboo and tabasheer, of which there are four species; 6, miscellaneous trees, including seven species, to which there are added supplementary notices of twenty more. The sixth class, "articles of clothing," comprising two orders: 1, silk, cloth, and leather, which includes twenty-five species; 2, "implements and materials," which embrace fifty-four species. The seventh class, "insects," comprises four orders: 1, superior oviparous, including twenty-two species; 2, inferior oviparous, twenty-one species; 3, "transformed," thirty-one species; 4, those produced from damp, twenty-three species. The eighth class, "scaly animals," comprising four orders; 1, the dragon, of which there are nine species; 2, the serpent, of which there are seventeen species; 3, fish, of which there are twenty-eight species;

4, fishes without scales, of which there are thirty-one species, with a supplementary addition of nine other kinds. The ninth class—animals with shells—has two orders: 1, the hill tortoise, having seventeen species; 2, the water tortoise, twenty-nine species, among which oysters, crabs, and other kinds of shell fish are enumerated. The tenth class—birds—comprises four orders; belonging, 1, to the *water*, which has thirteen species; 2, to the *plain*, which has twenty-two species; 3, to the *forest*, which has seventeen species; 4, to the *mountain*, which has thirteen species. The eleventh class — quadrupeds — comprises four orders: 1, domestic, including twenty-eight species; 2, wild, including thirty-eight species; 3, the mouse tribe, including twelve species; 4, the monkey tribe, and extraordinary animals of that kind, altogether eight species. The twelfth class—man—consists only of one order and one species. These twelve classes added to the four classes of metals, stones, minerals, and fossils, noticed in the beginning of these remarks, make up the *sixteen* classes.

The following different fruits are mentioned in the preceding index: the pear, quince, pomegranate, orange, pumelo, fingered citron, maspilus japonica, golden orange, arbutus, silver almond, walnut, *le che*—a kind of plum, dragon's eye, beetle nut, jack fruit, and fig. Among the fruits designated "aromatic," are various sorts of pepper, melons, vines, water-melons, and sugar-cane. Among the insects, the silkworm and the stone silkworm are the only two species noticed. Of the domestic animals, the hog, dog, sheep, goat, cow, buffalo, horse, ass, and camel, are the principal. There is another work called "The Horse Classic," which seems to have been written exclusively for

veterinary purposes, or rather to explain the diseases peculiar to horses, since one hundred and twelve drawings are given, to represent the diseases to which horses are liable, with the best mode of curing them. These being arranged according to the four seasons, numerous diseases, as they are most likely to happen in spring, summer, autumn, or winter, are minutely detailed under each of those heads, with a *materia medica*, and the proper mode of training and feeding horses. Although there is nothing interesting in a scientific view, in the details, still they show the care with which this noble animal has been treated by the Chinese, and their anxiety to preserve it from the influence of damps, and from a broken wind, and to cure its local disorders.

Among the wild animals are specified the rhinoceros with one horn (probably the unicorn of the Scriptures), and another species having two horns; also the lion, leopard, tiger, elephant, wild horse, wild boar, stag, goat, bear, the musk animal (moschiferus), the enchanted or intellectual cat, the fox, the hare, the wolf, and the otter. The class of monkeys contains six species of different names, which, however, do not convey any thing particular except the *sing-sing*, which the Malays call *orang-ūtan*—"the man of the forest"—and the *fei-fei*, which is said to resemble a man; and as these animals are represented by the Chinese in an erect position, on their hinder feet, and are placed the next to man in the series of animals described in the work from which I am quoting, it is probable the ancients considered the *sing* and the *fei* as a sort of connecting link between the brute and the human species.

In a work on agriculture and weaving, directions are

given on the latter topic for the proper treatment of the silkworm. It is divided into twenty-three parts, each containing short notices of the method to be employed from the first rearing of the silkworm to the production of the raw material, and its final adaptation for clothing. It begins with the bathing of the cocoon, and describes the process of keeping the silkworm in a proper temperature, supplying it with suitable leaves, and making all necessary preparations for weaving; but as this work only incidentally mentions the silkworm as subservient to the manufacture of silken garments from the produce of its labours, it contains no accounts of its habits that would interest the naturalist.

It is singular that one of the topics suggested as essential to success, is the act of sacrificing and returning thanks to the god of the silkworms.

Too frequently merely irregular details of the usages in practice, without any attempt to classify the species on philosophical principles, is the only guide the Chinese student is favoured with in such cases; and as it is not compatible with the objects of this work to enter into the minutiæ of the treatment of the silkworm, neither is it necessary to do more than state general theories, since I can refer my readers who may wish for more ample details on the care of the silkworm, to the valuable information communicated by J. F. Davies, Esq., on this subject, in his interesting work on China.

The sexual system of the universe, to which we have had such frequent occasion to refer, from its appropriation to plants, gives the botanical system of the Chinese an appearance of greater conformity to the modern theories of western philosophers than it really possesses. Hence

many names of plants with the word "female" prefixed to them, might lead a European botanist immediately to conclude that these were all arranged on scientific principles, agreeably to the demonstrative evidence on which his own theories have been based; whereas such names as the female *epidendrum*, the female *fermenting plant*, the female *coriander* ("that is the white coriander," says the author), the female *stem*, female *flower*, and several other similar appellations, have been arbitrarily imposed, either to sustain the sexual theory of the material fabric of the universe, or from some fancied resemblance in the plant to some property of the female species in animated creatures. Still the sexual theory applied to plants, and other inanimate productions, though its principles are erroneous, will doubtless be of distinguished service to the cause of natural history, whenever the scientific systems of Europe shall obtain an audience of the sons of the celestial territory, whose language, thus prepared, will more readily convey the superior conceptions and arrangements of the west, on this and other scientific or philosophical subjects. That some attention has been paid to natural history, and a foundation thereby laid for the ampler discussion of the subject, is evident from the works already published, and the labour bestowed in preparing, according to existing notions, permanent records for the amusement and instruction of the people. One such work, in addition to those already noticed, is designated "Extensive grouping of Fragrant Genealogies:" it contains a nomenclature of numerous plants in an original text elucidated by commentaries from different authors of varied length.

The "tea plant," and the "cotton tree," are the only species to which I can allude. The volume on tea begins

with a record of the several names which have been appropriated to it, accompanied by the following description of the plant. "The tree is like the *kwa-leu*, the name of a medicinal plant; its foliage like that of the che-tsze, which bears a white fragrant flower; its flowers are like the white rose (tseang-wei), but the yellow centre has a pure concealed fragrance (perhaps not strongly scented); its fruit is like the ping-leu; its stems like the ting-heang; its trunk like that of the walnut or peach tree. With regard to its height, some species are one cubit, a foot and a half; some two cubits; some several tens of cubits; the circumference of which would require two men to embrace them." Much space is occupied in minutely describing the districts and places where the best teas grow, and with a detail of the fanciful names by which different sorts are distinguished, and the still more fanciful analogies introduced for the sake of illustration; there are the dragon and phœnix teas; the sparrow-tongued leaf; the soft and tender cricket-winged leaf; the early spring yellow germs and leaves which mutually embrace like the petals of flowers and buds; and an endless variety of nominal characteristics, without any thing approaching to a scientific classification to relieve the uninteresting detail.

In the same work the names of several species of the "cotton tree" are given. "The muh-méén," or cloth-tree; the ancient, or felicitous, pearl; the koo-chung, or grass-cloth, which designates a different species from that of the tree: the Indian books call it tan-po, and kea-lo-po. The mŭh-méén is of two kinds, the one belonging to the order of herbs, the other to that of trees, which are equally extended in their structure. The branches of the tree

are like those of the Tung, or varnish tree; its foliage like that of the walnut tree, which at the beginning of autumn opens its blushing flowers like the pistils of the wild *camellia japonica;* its petals being very thick, form the closest calix; their short sides mutually correspond. Its fruit is the size of a man's fist, in the middle of which there is the white cotton, also containing within itself the seed. That species which southern historians call the production of the *Lin-pa* country, is the "ancient pearl," the centre of whose flower is like a goose's feather; and that which the records of the state Woo call the "eternally splendid cotton tree," which grows above the house-tops, is a tree resembling the cotton tree, but not of the same *genus.* There is another species of "cotton tree" planted north of the river Hwae, with a slender stem, like that of herbaceous plants or creepers, from four to five cubits high, whose leaves are spiral with three points, like the acer maple, or sycamore tree; it bears flowers in the beginning of autumn like the sunflower, and small ones of reddish nankeen colour; its fruit is like the peach, in the centre of which is white cotton containing seed, which resembles that of the *dryandra-cordifolia;* it also yields nankeen cotton; it is plucked in the eighth month, and called the "cotton flower." The species denominated by southern writers "high and splendid," has grass fruit like the cacoon of the silkworm, which yields a fine hemp, the cloth of which is called the white tëë 疊. The province of Kwei-chow yields the creeping cotton plants, which give fruit like the downy feathers of a goose; this is the cotton of the grass plant. This species was first cultivated at the close of the southern Sung dynasty,* having

* A.D. 1281.

been originally introduced in the southern districts, but is now also prevalent both in the northern and middle districts.

In concluding the subjects of this volume, and as a necessary supplement to the efforts of native authors, it will not be out of place to give a specimen of foreign attempts to introduce European literature to the notice of the Chinese through the medium of their own tongue. It is well known that China was first indebted to the zeal and ability of the Romish Missionaries for correct principles on theological and moral science, which were recommended to them by instructions in mathematics, geometry, astronomy, and some of the practical arts of life. It is not my intention to notice the French, Latin, or English works which have been published by the different orders of the Romish clergy, by gentlemen connected with the Protestant churches, and mercantile establishments of my own country, but in conformity with the plan I have heretofore adopted, to quote from works written in the Chinese language, or confined to the elucidation of it. Those who desire to see an enumeration of the authors who have published works on China, arranged in chronological order, will be gratified by consulting the late Dr. Morrison's Chinese Miscellany,* in which judicious remarks are interspersed either on the character of the writers or their subjects. But as the learned and able work of Premare, in Latin, under the title "Notitia Linguæ Sinicæ," was not published when Dr. Morrison wrote these notices, it seems to claim some attention here. It is designed to aid the student of Chinese in his acquisi-

* Page 44, etc.:—"Notices of European intercourse with China, and of books concerning it, arranged in chronological order."

tion of that tongue. And as some remarks on the study of the language and literature may be expected to conclude this volume, I will introduce those which Premare has made in the work now under review, as well as for a specimen of the ability with which some Catholic Missionaries pursued their indefatigable labours. To every one who has commenced the arduous task of studying Chinese, it will soon be evident, that if he desires early proficiency he must not encumber his incipient labours with attention to the niceties of style; but that to acquire a correct medium of communication, acquaint himself with the revered sentiments of Chinese sages, and obtain a respectable position among the natives, there are certain authors which he must diligently study, until he has imbibed their spirit and appropriated their best expressions. Such an attainment will be more readily made by imitating their composition in practice, than by seeking to reduce it to grammatical principles. The author of the Notitia seems to have proceeded on this conviction, both from the general plan of the work, and his exposition of his own method of acquiring the language. "The plan," he says, "which, I confess, yielded me much benefit, is this. When I commenced the study of Chinese authors, I had the text of Măng-Tsze, Lun-Yu, Ta-Heŏ, and Chung-Yung, carefully transcribed on paper suited to a European pen, not such as the Chinese pencil requires. The characters with lines sufficiently apart were written on each alternate page. Afterwards I got the 'Four Books' bound up in one volume, and with such preparation proceeded diligently to examine the text and consult commentators. On the alternate blank page I wrote my notes, which were composed of the following materials:

first, I preserved all phrases that appeared important, that I might apprehend the exact sense of the text and acquire an elegant style; secondly, I equally noted those things which are deemed inferior by the commentators, to ascertain how far the moderns are blinded on the subject of criticism, and how miserably incongruous they are among themselves; thirdly, when I perceived errors and difficulties, I did not fail to record them for the purpose of discussion with the learned. The sounds and meaning of certain characters, I placed at their side; I wish I had also marked the tones and aspirates when it was easy to acquire them. The advantages derivable in a short time from this plan may be proved by any one who will make the experiment. Several indices alphabetically arranged should be placed at the end of each book, by means of which whatever is required may be found without difficulty, although it might otherwise be sought in vain with much labour in so many small native volumes. I earnestly recommend all who are ambitious to excel as Chinese scholars, to prepare several blank volumes for the following purposes:—to contain all the figurative expressions which occur in reading, to record characters which are *contraries* opposite to each other in two separate columns, to inscribe the names of eminently distinguished ancients, and to supply references to celebrated places, trees, flowers, rivers, animals, and stones; these things are truly gratifying to polite writers. But there is one point of still greater moment, which I fear must be considered rather as desirable than attainable with novitiates in missionary labour. I would suggest to those who are yet young, and whose retentive faculty is in its full vigour, what no one hinted to me, the expediency of committing to memory

the whole of the 'Four Books,' as Chinese boys are accustomed to learn them; for we must become boys again if we hope to preach Jesus Christ with effect to these nations; and what labour would not such a hope render delightful? I will briefly touch upon the certain benefits derivable from this practice to inflame the zeal of my dearest brethren. First, when you shall have learned those books *memoriter* not a word improperly pronounced will escape your lips, because as a boy you will listen to your Chinese teacher, and imbibe no other sounds but those which proceed from him; secondly, not only will sounds be rightly remembered, but attention will also be secured to the form and composition of the symbols; thirdly, it will be very profitable to write out from memory characters from the text which you have recently learned, and at a future period compare them diligently with your author, to see whether any error has crept in; fourthly, by this means, Chinese words become firmly fixed in the mind; and it is far preferable thus to understand only a hundred characters, than to acquire a thousand according to the methods usually adopted; fifthly, if in the course of three or four years you think of composing in Chinese, you will then with great joy reap the sweetest and most abundant fruits from this apparently bitter root; for the symbols will present themselves spontaneously to your mind, and each without further trouble assume its proper position in the sentence. Nevertheless it is almost impossible to persuade Europeans to undertake what to them (falsely indeed) appears to be useless labour. I ask, however, two things to be granted to me as absolutely necessary: first, that certain passages most pleasing to them in the authors which they read shall be committed to me-

mory; for if what is gathered in this way be not all fruit, it should not be despised; since it will soon appear how much learned Chinese esteem a foreigner whom they hear reciting quotations from their own books, and retaining some things in memory and explaining others even better than native teachers: secondly, that as soon as possible the art of writing the character be acquired, if not with the Chinese pencil, at least with a European pen."

Every candid reader of the Notitia Linguæ Sinicæ will be convinced that the learned author has rendered essential service to Chinese literature, by his diligence in collecting materials, both ample and rare, for the elucidation of the language, and by the superior judgment with which he has arranged them. The writer has no historical knowledge of the author, further than, as it should seem from an incidental remark in the body of the treatise, that he was in China at the commencement of the last century; for when adverting to the style of a passage in the Chung Yung, with a view to caution the student against indiscriminately imitating its profusion of ornament, he observes, "but I held a different opinion in the year 1709, when it first occurred to me to attempt Chinese composition." A specimen is then given of the essay, which was written in the style of the above work, and entitled "The Dream of a beautiful Country related," the model of which appears to have been Cicero's Somnium Scipionis. It is surprising such an able work as the Notitia should have remained so long unpublished. It was preserved in the archives of the University of Paris until Dr. Morrison returned to England, to whom an Irish nobleman then presented it in manuscript, together with a munificent donation to the Anglo-Chinese College, for the purpose of

defraying the expenses of its publication. It was forthwith despatched to Malacca and printed at the Mission press from the funds thus supplied, under the superintendence of the officers of the College.

The usual mode of Chinese printing is on wooden blocks—one being required for each page, similar to stereotyped plates—which will only suit works entirely in the native language. There was a small fount of Chinese moveable types at Malacca, the only kind of type combinable with European letters; but it did not contain more than the most common symbols: and hence every character comprehended in this work, which was not already cut, required to be engraved by the tedious process of manual labour. From the type so cut, whether combined with the European letter or used alone, a correct impression was readily obtained by the ordinary mode of printing; comparative inelegance in its appearance was to be expected; correctness is, however, secured. The want of accented English letters to express the tones constituted another difficulty, especially in the former part of the work. Every effort was made, but not always with success, to give effect to the admirable plan of the author, who had marked the proper tone of each character, along with its pronunciation, in Roman letters. But apart from defects, which could scarcely be avoided under such circumstances, the work will furnish valuable assistance to the foreign student of Chinese, and thus amply reward the noble donor's beneficent intentions in giving it to the world. Its publication must in one respect be regarded as the fruit of the Anglo-Chinese College, since it furnished facilities for printing the native character, confessedly indeed imperfect, but which could not be procured

in Europe. Surely, amid all the changes and improvements that are continually occurring, some efforts will ere long be made to cast a fount of Chinese types in England. The Chinese themselves once had a fount of moveable types cast from copper ore, which they designated congregated pearls; but they melted them up again after a time, partly, perhaps, from partiality to the old system of block-cutting, as well as from their ignorance of the art of type-founding. Still stereotype in wood is remarkably well adapted to the Chinese language, when not combined with any other, as some of their own elegantly-printed works testify.

The Notitia should occupy a place in the library of every Chinese scholar. The treatise is divided into two parts; the former comprising observations on the colloquial medium, the latter on the beauties of written composition, exemplified by luminous quotations from the best native authorities. In this portion of the work there is a discourse in Chinese on the "Being of God," which displays elegance of style, and a mode of discussing proofs of the Divine existence adapted to the habits of reasoning and reflection among the Chinese literati. It was written by a companion of Premare's, who had laboured some years in the service of the Catholic Mission, and might well pass for native composition, imbued with the Christian argument in favour of one God. Towards its close the author laudably commends the sacred Scriptures as the only depository of accurate knowledge respecting the Supreme Jehovah.

Perhaps a few remarks on the Catholic Mission to China may without impropriety conclude this article. Its present state evidently ought not to be considered as a

specimen of its entire history; for, whatever inefficiency has lately characterized its agents, the works of several at an earlier period bear powerful testimony to their ability, zeal, and diligence; who, as their Chinese writings manifest, were neither devoid of evangelical knowledge, nor sparing of pains to communicate it impressively to the heathen. Errors of the Romish Church, without doubt, occur in their treatises; but on topics which did not interfere with Romanism they express themselves like men of good sense and solid piety, who duly appreciated the most valuable portions of divine revelation. The following paragraph, translated from the Chinese, forms part of a Catholic manuscript. It exhibits a method of instructing pagans which cannot fail to gratify every lover of truth. Competent native scholars consider the style as very superior; and it is on this account I introduce it, as well as to furnish a specimen of religious instruction from the pen of a Romish Missionary. This is the extract:—

"When I state that a personage of most honourable and illustrious condition became incarnate, suffered inhuman punishment and the horrors of crucifixion, perhaps some will inquire on what grounds men can be called upon to submit to Him as the Ruler of the Universe? I reply, humiliation and punishment are undergone either deservedly or as an unjust infliction. If deservedly, there is no great merit in the subject of them suffering without complaint; but undeserved suffering, endured both cheerfully and voluntarily for the benefit of others, is esteemed in the highest possible degree meritorious. According to the sentiments of mankind and the maxims of the world, every thing must be regulated by rank; therefore, if the circumstances of the person degraded be originally mean,

and his habits of life low, although the degradation be complete, it is wholly unattended with redeeming traits of glory. But deep humiliation, where it is connected with original dignity, will be accompanied with honour corresponding in degree to the depths of its voluntary abasement.

"A drought continued seven years under the Shang dynasty, during which the emperor, on behalf of the people, interceded with heaven for rain. To do this effectually he covered his body with rushes, assumed the position of a bullock devoted to sacrifice, cut off his hair, paired his nails, inflicted punishment on his own body for sins, and debased himself to the uttermost. But notwithstanding this degradation, the glory with which he was surrounded rendered it imperceptible to his ministers and people; because he sought to remove a direful calamity under which the whole nation had long groaned. The deeper, therefore, his personal humiliation became, the more resplendent was the honour to which it exalted him. An ordinary individual could not have displayed the same eminence of character, even though his abasement were yet more profound; for, if he deserved to suffer, his degradation would only render him a fitter object of reprobation and contempt; and, as humiliation derives its character from the deserts of the subject of it, its merit must be regulated by his dignity and worth.

"Now, Sir, you do not ask whether Jesus, the Son of God, is in glory or in ignominy? This question is clearly understood; but you allege it is impossible to believe on him and submit to him. If I had said Jesus's deep disgrace shadows forth his exalted honour, his voluntary abasement displays his supreme dignity, his unparalleled

ignominy proclaims his infinite glory, I might not have produced conviction; therefore, to illustrate the subject more fully, I borrowed an allusion from historical recollections of Tang, which is, after all, like taking a particle of dust to represent the western mountains, or a drop of water to symbolize the eastern ocean. Still, small and great things compared together in a few particulars may tend to corroborate the evidences of truth. Tang was the prince of a country; Jesus Christ is the Lord of the universe. To estimate Tang's merit by his virtue, he only delivered one nation from famine at a peculiar æra; Jesus is able, by his virtue and his merit, to rescue the inhabitants of ten thousand provinces, or even ten thousand worlds, from everlasting misery. Tang only charged upon himself the six calamities incident to the body; but Jesus congregated in his own person the curses due to the sins of all mankind. Tang's sacrifices only aimed to prolong the mortal existence of the people for a short period; Jesus endured concentrated agonies from the scourge, the nails, the spear, and the cross on which he expired, to procure for guilty multitudes the blessings of eternal life. It is needless to point out which is the superior of these two characters; and if the inferior, without previous degradation, be honourably distinguished, then must the superior rise from his voluntary humiliation to infinitely higher honour and glory. This is already manifest; further discussion is unnecessary."

I will not detain the reader by commending the beauties of this excellent passage in detail. Truth, so important, elegantly expressed, as it is in Chinese, and admirably adapted to its final object, whoever is the medium of

communication, cannot but be productive of momentous consequences.

Among other works from the same school, of varied excellence, it is but just to state, that an epitome of the four Gospels which had been printed in China, although it embodied a faithful narrative of the most important points in our Saviour's life, was introduced by a traditionary legend of the church, but little in accordance with the dignified simplicity of the truths to which it is prefixed. There was also a short dissertation on the Trinity, the doctrine of which, as it respected the personality of the Father and of the Son, was scripturally sustained; but it was not so with regard to the Sacred Spirit. His *existence*, as well as his operations, was represented by a word signifying "love" or "desire," and, consequently, personal attributes and perfections were merged in mere abstract influence. The style of composition is very superior. Several members of the Romish mission, in its earlier history, were learned and able men, skilled in the abstract sciences, and acquainted with their practical application to the arts of life, to whom the Chinese were indebted for much accurate knowledge of geometry, astronomy, and geography, and for treatises on mathematical science in general, some of which, distinguished for luminous thought and precision of language, I have perused with great satisfaction. It was by these men, also, that Europe was first correctly informed on the nature of the language, government, religion, ethics, and customs of China; and from them, for a long period, emanated whatever was known by Europeans of that distant people. Their successors, who seem to have degene-

rated in point of ability, have now lost their influence at court. Dr. Morrison says,* "he knew personally ten Catholic Missionaries in China—Italians, French, and Portuguese—who had resided at court, or on the frontier, from fourteen to thirty years, and only three of them could read Chinese; four of them had been many years in Peking and did not know a single symbol, but could speak the language, while some of the others could neither read nor speak it;" and, referring to their treatment at court, he adds further: "Subsequently to the reign of Kang-he, they have never or but rarely been admitted to an audience of the emperors; of late, placed under military guard at Peking, as the Russians also are, they have been more like prisoners than friends." Since the above was written, the whole of the Catholic Missionaries have been compelled to leave the capital. Their secular services can now be dispensed with. As they succeeded the Mohammedans, who were displaced to admit them, so they were retained at court only until natives acquired from them sufficient mathematical and astronomical knowledge to enable them to perform the duties formerly discharged by their instructors, whom they now supersede in the service of government.

No opportunities, similar to those enjoyed by the Catholics, have been afforded before or since to Europeans for the introduction of the sciences or Christian literature into China. Some of their number were in the confidence of the emperor of the last Chinese dynasty, as well as the most distinguished emperors of the present Tartar race; and, consequently, had access to the best aids for acquiring a knowledge of the Chinese language, as a medium of

* See Chinese Miscellany, page 51.

communicating western science. Hence the accuracy and elegance of their chief works, some of which contain mathematical diagrams, plates of astronomical and mathematical instruments, along with dissertations on land surveying, astronomy, dialling, logarithms, calculations, theories on music, with other practical treatises on subjects at that time in high repute. The influence they acquired by these means was for a time exceedingly great.

Why Divine Providence has permitted the destructive errors of Popery to overrun the most populous portions of the globe, previous to a full manifestation of the Gospel, is an inquiry not within reach of satisfactory solution. Nor is it important, except as it stimulates disciples of a purer creed to ask, whether their orthodoxy has yielded sacrifices to God equal in value with those which have been offered by the spirit of error at the shrine of ecclesiastical domination and worldly ambition. For if, in order to propagate tenets as devoid of spiritual consolation as their practical influence is baneful, men brave the terrors of persecution, and meet death in its most horrid forms without dismay, what degree of labour and sorrow is too painful for the servant of Christ to endure in diffusing the peaceful reign of Heaven, supported by the "strong consolation" of the Gospel? Sound learning and piety doubtless distinguished some who devoted their lives to the extension of Popery in China, though beclouded by the mists of educational error; but these were not many in proportion to the number sent forth, and therefore their acquirements and talents formed an exception to the general standard. If, however, a church which holds the truth in unrighteousness occasionally teaches wholesome doctrine, and furnishes workmen that need not to be

ashamed, what should be the fruits of a system avowedly formed on a divine model, and disciplined according to the received dictates of Holy Scripture? If truth, marred by human inventions, sometimes produces noble results, how majestic must be its influence, when, unfettered with superstitious prejudices, untainted with selfish motives, it emanates in original purity from its heavenly source, free as that influence which was breathed on the Apostles by the Holy Ghost? If God has in any wise rendered instrumental to the diffusion of the truth an institution so opposed in numerous particulars to His own statutes, is there not reason to hope that He will crown every method of human agency with success, in proportion to its agreement with Holy Scripture, and its opposition to every method save that which He himself has appointed? While diligence, ardour, self-denial, learning, and perfect devotion to their object, stand forth in some Romish Missionaries as characteristics worthy of generous emulation, grievous errors in doctrine, idolatrous superstitions, worldly-mindedness, political ambition, strife, and desire of personal pre-eminence, in many others, serve as beacons to point out the rocks on which Romanism finally suffered shipwreck.

The ascendancy which these missions had once acquired in India and China was gained by pandering to human passions and lusts, and by directing the course of truth through the impure channels of idolatry and superstition. Power was sought by means of worldly connections and secular pursuits, not in subordination to religion, but as leading objects under the sanction of its venerable name. Their fate should, therefore, operate as a warning

to abettors of state policy, who use a form of divine worship as a pretext for selfish and ambitious views. For whatever moral excellence, and natural or acquired ability, belong to individuals, it will not avail to secure permanent success to the system; nor can any establishment be preserved from corruption and ultimate ruin, which, while it professes to extend the kingdom of God, repudiates the principles of eternal truth for the sake of worldly maxims, and trusts to secular power for its aggrandisement and prosperity.

Although it is not my object minutely to state what Protestants have accomplished in China, either to diffuse their religious principles, or to promote the cause of general literature, still, having noticed the labours of the Romish church on both points, it is but just to give a summary view of what has been effected by the united benevolence of the British people. The official publications of the London Missionary Society, and other works on the Chinese mission, furnish details which it is not necessary to repeat. The truth is, the hostility of the Chinese government to the settlement of foreigners within its territories has so circumscribed Christian exertions as to leave little to narrate of historical interest. Works that should facilitate the future cultivation of Chinese philology by Europeans, and secure a standard of appeal on theology for Chinese in their own language, were the first great objects at which the founders of the Chinese mission aimed. These have been so far attained, that a comprehensive dictionary, a grammar, and other minor works on language, have been published to aid the studies of Europeans; and a valuable translation of the

Scriptures,* together with numerous excellent and useful tracts, chiefly on theology, have been prepared for the Chinese, and printed at the united expense of the Missionary, Bible, and Tract Societies. The use of the press, an essential preliminary step to direct moral and literary influence, has hitherto been the only practicable means of intercourse with China. The location of Chinese missions in colonies upwards of a thousand miles distant, could not be expected to make any perceptible impression on the mother country, though, without doubt, some good has thereby been indirectly accomplished. So far as it regards Chinese printing, education, free intercourse with the colonists, and the unfettered publication of books in the Chinese language, the end of such establishments has been to some extent answered. Great difficulties, however, have arisen from the inability of the European constitution long to sustain unremitting mental application in such a climate, and from the very small proportion of persons sent out who, either from sickness or other causes, have succeeded in acquiring a thorough command of the language.

Literary works by gentlemen connected with the British factory have also appeared; these, we believe, have been principally confined to the English language, consisting either of translations from native authors, or general descriptions of the habits, sentiments, and customs of the people, from the opportunities afforded by personal observation and intercourse; all which are valuable in the

* For the author's opinion of Morrison's Chinese Dictionary, and Morrison's and Milne's Translation of the Sacred Scriptures, see his "Critical Notices of Dr. Morrison's Literary Labours," subjoined to Mrs. Morrison's Memoirs of the Doctor's life.

circle to which they belong, and have contributed to remove the ignorance and prejudice which had so long covered Europe on purely Chinese matters. Since the Catholic missions have lost favour at court, small Latin publications on Chinese subjects have occasionally issued from the Catholic college at Macao, which has students preparing for the priesthood in China under the patronage of the Portuguese government. It is only just, though a fact well known, to notice the munificent pecuniary aid afforded to the cause of Chinese literature by the Honourable East India Company, who printed at their entire expense Dr. Morrison's dictionary; and the readiness with which members of the British factory in China, and officers civil and military in the service of the Company, have at various times rendered very liberal contributions to promote the education of Chinese youth in the Straits of Malacca. Gentlemen of the medical profession connected with the British factory in China, with whom Dr. Morrison co-operated in the establishment of an hospital for sick natives, cheerfully employed their time and talents in the mitigation of disease, and the general improvement of medical science. The desirableness of institutions to improve the moral and physical condition of pagans, based on principles purely scriptural, must strike every eye-witness of the deplorable sufferings arising from the combined influence of vice, disease, and ignorance. And as education most naturally unites itself with the proper duties of the Christian minister, so it is this sphere chiefly in which the Missionary has exercised his talents abroad. But as it was the custom of our Lord and his apostles to effect miraculous cures of otherwise incurable diseases, both of mind and body, as a general testimony to the

supremely benevolent character of the Christian system, so, in the absence of supernatural gifts, most favourable impressions will, no doubt, be made on the minds of the Chinese, by means of medical treatment in combination with moral and religious instruction. With this view the gratuitous aid formerly afforded by the Honourable East India Company's medical officers, has lead to more extended efforts in this department of Christian benevolence, by British and American Christians. The former, before the present hostilities commenced, had two efficient surgeons in China, one of them, a graduate in the London University, stationed with the hospital at Macao, the other located at Canton, both under the patronage of the London Missionary Society. The Americans, who were the first to act on the principle of sending medical Missionaries, had physicians and surgeons in China before the present interruption to foreign commerce occurred. While Missionaries have done what they could in the art of healing in connection with their own proper duties, and medical gentlemen, sent out by Christian societies, are expected to use the influence acquired by their profession in favour of Christianity; still theology, literature, science, and the healing art, especially in China, must be attended to separately, if eminent success in any one department is sought.

The issue of the present contest, whether protracted in its operations or brought to a speedy conclusion, cannot be doubtful. Great Britain will not withdraw her hostile forces without entire satisfaction; nor will the Chinese, whose resources lie in evasion and falsehood, on which they act, apparently unconscious of shame, ever make concessions, or observe any treaty to which they may

promise to become parties, unless from awe, inspired by the presence of a powerful force. No one would be more sorry than the author, even to appear to be the advocate of the dreadful calamity of war. His object in the present statement is to express his opinions of the progress and result of the present conflict. It would have been considered harsh not to have believed the emperor, who declared by a special ambassador to the British authorities, that he had been deceived, but now that he was correctly informed on the whole case, their grievances should be redressed if they returned to Canton; and in proof of his sincerity, not only superseded the responsible officer, but placed his life at the disposal of the British, and appointed another commissioner, with full powers to negotiate; yet who, with any experience of the Chinese character, but must have known that it was a scheme of pure deception, advanced only for the purpose of ridding the north of the presence of the barbarians, and of lulling them into inactivity until further offensive measures were prepared? But since the emperor has forcibly demonstrated by his actions, and illustrated by his own pen, the perfidious nature of his promises, and, consequently, the futility of all treaties, whose fulfilment is not secured by actual deposits, or the presence of an adequate military establishment, it cannot be urged that the British have assumed the faithlessness of the Chinese, without ample evidence to convict them of it.

It was no doubt a very difficult position in which the immediate successor to the administrator of the East India Company's affairs was placed, when called upon to discharge the duties of negotiator between the Chinese and British, not merely from the influx of strangers, unaccus-

tomed to the manners of the natives, but especially from the difference between the office of president of a mercantile establishment, and that of the representative of the sovereign of Great Britain. The peculiar views entertained by the Chinese of the inferiority of mercantile employment as the lowest of four grades into which they divide the community;—regarding the cultivation of the mind as the first or most honourable, agriculture as the second, mechanical labour as the third, and trade or commerce as the fourth or lowest grade—in connection with their haughty bearing towards all foreigners, with whom they disdain to treat on equal terms, would make it most difficult for a British envoy to satisfy what the Chinese would call reasonable demands, without compromising the dignity of his own station. Rank might be opposed to rank, and credentials presented of equal authority to those of the imperial commissioner; but, unless by permitting his country to be placed on the same footing with the petty states of the East, there could be no regular transactions, and, consequently, no recognition of British rank and influence.

Without inquiring into the origin of the present war, all our anxieties should be directed to its results; on the nature of which, under Divine Providence, future Christian and literary efforts depend for their sphere of operation. It is difficult to conceive how the conflict can be terminated to the satisfaction of the British nation, except by procuring a settlement, either on the confines, or within the limits of the Chinese territory; where such persons as aim to promote peace and good-will among the Chinese by moral means, will be allowed permanently to reside, and to carry on their measures without interruption. And

if this be the effect of the present misunderstanding between the two empires, though it would have been thought most extravagant even to anticipate it a few years ago, still it will only be in accordance with the previous operations of Divine Providence, who by similar instrumentality transferred the territory of the East Indies, then under the dominion of native princes, to the sovereignty of Great Britain; not, as the immediate actors in those scenes supposed, for the sole purpose of extending British dominion, creating sources of official rank, and augmenting individual wealth and influence, but with the gracious design of eventually making these acquisitions subserve the diffusion of the imperishable principles of truth and holiness.

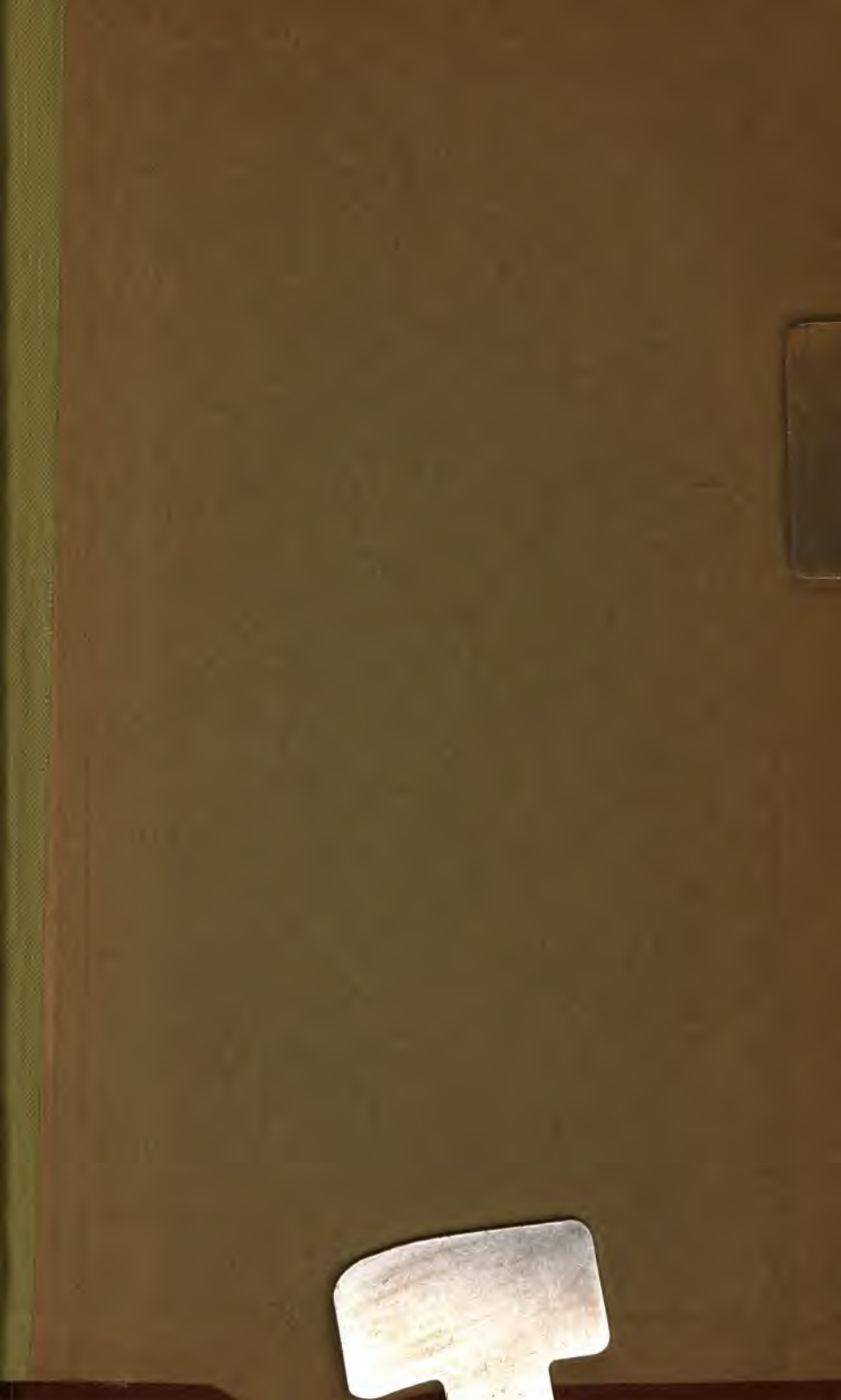
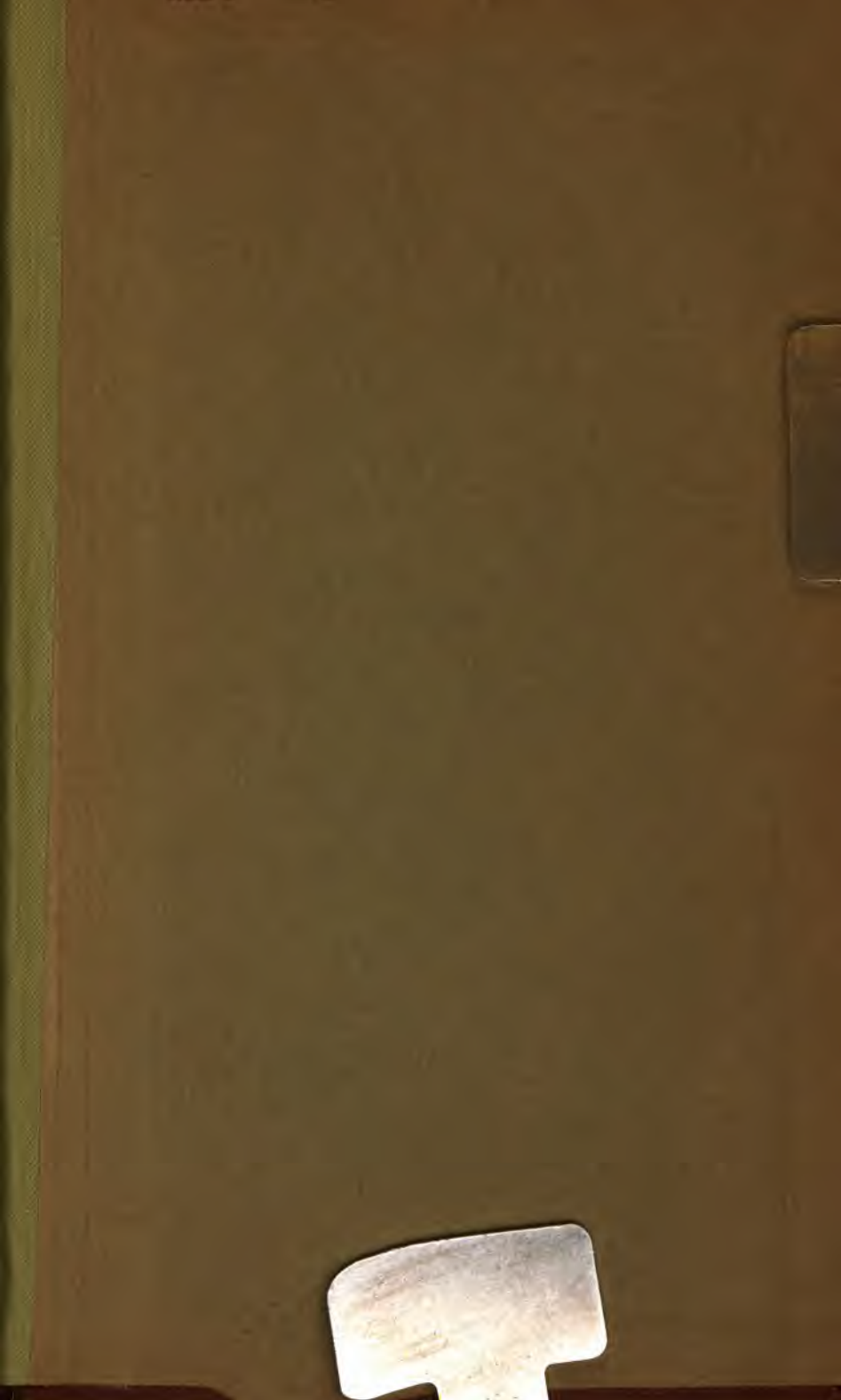
This benevolent object has been for some time gradually developing itself during a series of events that have occurred in the Indian empire; and, therefore, inspires the hope that, from the present unhappy circumstances in China, the same omnipotent Power is about to educe the highest possible good, by elevating the Chinese character to an eminence hitherto unattained, and giving to it a stability and grandeur which the great principles of revelation alone can impart.

As it has been my design in this volume to select prominent characteristics of the Chinese mind and manners, and elucidate them by various references to native works, so, as some important *practical* result should be aimed at, it is natural to inquire what can be done to extend the cultivation of Chinese literature in England? It is known that an opportunity is afforded at University College, London, with which the author has the honour of being connected, for studying the literature and language of

China; and that on the continent of Europe, at the French and German universities, this branch of oriental learning has been cultivated much longer and under more favourable auspices than in England; since facilities for disposing of translations and original essays through the medium of the press, and for securing literary patronage, have always been far superior on the continent, where there has been but little direct communication with China, than in England, which has for centuries had more extensive intercourse with the Chinese than any other nation. Without minute specification of the causes that have obstructed the free culture of the oriental languages in England, the chief one is the absorbing influence of commercial enterprize; and still it is surprising that while the East India Company have long directly promoted the study of Indian languages in England, they should not have pursued a similar course with respect to the Chinese during their administration of the affairs of British commerce in China. The sphere of influence there, compared with that of India, it is true, was extremely limited; but as gentlemen who studied Chinese for their own pleasure, after their arrival in the country, found such acquisitions attended with great advantage in their official character, it may be fairly inferred, that the public service would have been promoted by a similar institution, though on a smaller scale, to that of Haileybury College. But as the trade of China has been transferred to the British people, under the immediate direction of the government, they have now a positive interest in promoting mutual esteem, and laying the basis of amicable intercourse between the two countries, by encouraging the cultivation of their language, and thus giving an opportunity to those who

are to be the future representatives of the British nation in China, not only to acquaint themselves with its general laws and customs, but to acquire the ability of communicating with its subjects in their own tongue. There can be no doubt that this object would be greatly promoted if the government were to make it a condition, on the appointment of their servants to China, that they should acquire the language to an extent sufficient to render future progress both easy and attractive, and to encourage, by its patronage, the general cultivation of Chinese literature; as the entire trade is now thrown open to the public, the small pecuniary aid required would be amply repaid by the benefits derivable to themselves from the freer communication such measures would be likely to establish between China and England. Still, I confess, I would much rather that the liberality, the learning, and the benevolent aid, of the British people, were called forth for the avowed purpose of encouraging the study of an important branch of general philology, and of oriental philosophy, than for the mere object of subserving the growth of political power and commercial influence. It is difficult for individuals, who before success can crown their efforts have to create a taste for an unpopular subject, to be sustained from private resources with sufficient energy in the prosecution of their incipient labours, until they have achieved the desired success. But if once the aid of the British government were afforded, there is much to animate the student of the languages of the further East, which extend over an immense field but little cultivated; and, according to the indications of Divine Providence, are soon to be still more widely opened to European researches. In this sphere, also, the object to be aimed at by the

scholar should be two-fold: that of acquiring oriental knowledge, in order effectually to communicate in the native languages the superior systems of the west; all which, to be eminently successful in a moral point of view, must be founded on the grand principles of Divine Revelation.

THE END.

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